



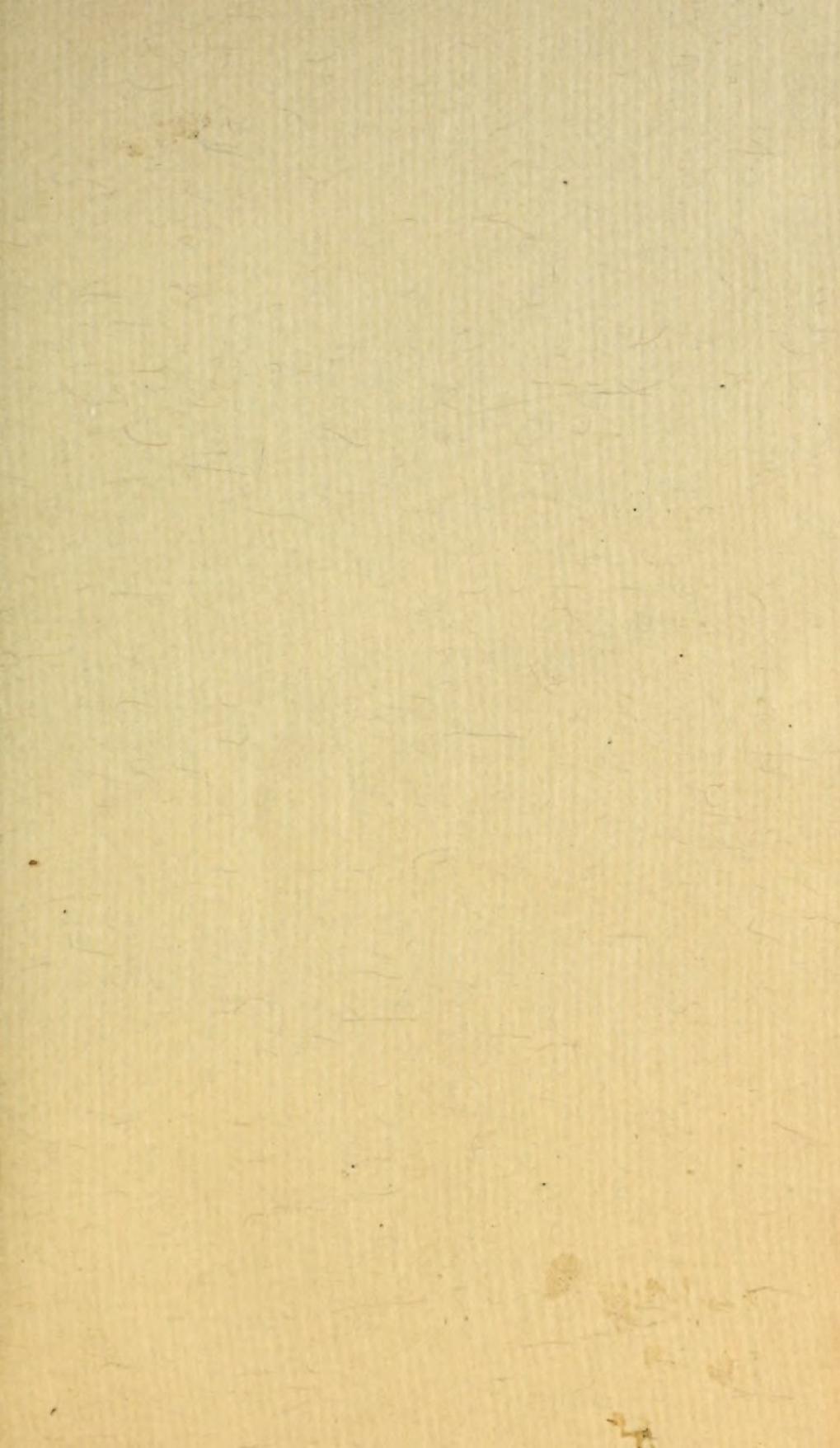
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THE
WANDERING SOUL;

OR,

DIALOGUES BETWEEN THE WANDERING SOUL AND
ADAM, NOAH, AND SIMON CLEOPHAS.

COMPRISED A

HISTORY OF THE WORLD,

SACRED AND PROFANE,

FROM THE CREATION UNTIL THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

FROM WHICH

MAY BE SEEN HOW ONE MONARCHY AND KINGDOM SUCCEEDED ANOTHER,
HOW THIS HAD ITS RISE, AND THAT WAS DISSOLVED; AND AN
EXTENSIVE DETAIL OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

BY JOHN PHILIP SCHABALIE.

ORIGINALY WRITTEN IN THE HOLLAND LANGUAGE:
TRANSLATED INTO GERMAN,

BY BERNHART B. BRECHEBILL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FOURTH AMERICAN EDITION INTO ENGLISH,

BY I. DANIEL RUPP,
Author, "Der Maertyr Geschichte," &c. &c.

TO WHICH A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE AND A COPIOUS INDEX ARE
ADDED, ADAPTED TO THE WORK.

SECOND AND IMPROVED EDITION, WITH ENGRAVINGS

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GERMAN TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

TO THE GENTLE READER.

DEARLY beloved reader, this book came into my hands in the Holland language. After having examined and read it, I resolved to communicate it also to the German reader. The author of it is John Philip Schabalie. The contents of it are a succinct epitome, comprising the leading historical facts of the world, from its creation to the year A. D. 109.

From this book the Christian may see how unstable the kingdoms and states of this world are; but he may also become acquainted with the virtues and vices of mankind, and the vast difference between the two in their issue; thus I concluded, that this book contains much useful and common information; especially calculated for young persons, who, having a desire for such knowledge as is promotive of godliness; namely, that they may view themselves as in a mirror, in the examples of the pious and the ungodly, and learn to consider their end, which are plainly set forth in this work. What is here

recorded may be found more at large in the Sacred Scriptures. According to my estimation and judgment, this book is none of those of little importance—it is justly entitled to a place next in rank with the Sacred Scriptures themselves. It is not only a summary of the Sacred Scriptures, but it comprises also many other historical facts, not contained in them, which took place at the time those did, mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. This book also contains a narrative of the fulfilment of the predictions of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, until A. D. 109. The whole extent of time that it comprises is rising of four thousand years.

I hope it may be as acceptable with us Germans as it is with the Low Dutch, with whom it has been repeatedly reprinted and sold; not only pleasing to read, but I hope many may be excited thereby to become wandering souls—travelling through the wilderness of this world, having their hearts directed heavenward: and that every reader may be edified by the knowledge of the truths of godliness so amply contained in this little work—may all tend to the edification of the Christian; so that he may learn to know

the Sacred Scriptures from a child, as did Timothy : For the Scriptures only can make man wise unto salvation by faith in Jesus Christ our God. Amen. B. B. B.

List of books from which the materials of these Dialogues have been selected.

1. The Sacred Scriptures.
2. Flavius Josephus.
3. Egesippus on the Destruction of Jerusalem
4. Church History by Eusebius.
5. Extracts from Nicephero.
6. Church History by C. Baronia.
7. Augustin's Book of the City of God.
8. Caius Plinius on Animals.
9. Phorasis of Erasmus.
10. Sayings of Peter Messias.
11. The Bible of Nature by Plassius.
12. The Journey Book.
13. The Biblical Nomenclature.
14. The Low Dutch Chronology.
15. John Calvin's Harmony.
16. G. Marceton's Harmony.
17. The Letters of Gentellius.
18. The Memorable Sayings.
19. Several Books of the Life of Christ,
20. Several Treatises of his Death.



THE WANDERING SOUL.

DIALOGUE I.

BETWEEN THE WANDERING SOUL AND ADAM.

Wandering Soul. O reverend father ! I desire to be instructed, happily to finish the course of my pilgrimage ; hence, I am constrained to accost you first, for I understand that you have lived many years ; nay, your very appearance indicates it. Moreover, you have walked with God, and had converse with men ; therefore, experience has taught you wisdom.

Adam. O son ! it is true I am a very aged person, for I have lived nearly 930 years, Gen. v. 5, and do not think to live many years more, neither would I desire it. But, could I have remained in my first state—in the pleasant and glorious paradise, I should never have become weary of life ; to continue longer in this ruined world, I have no desire.

W. S. For the very purpose have I come to you, to learn how you fell from that blessed state, and that I may profit by it.

A. My son, be silent ; for I cannot think of it without shedding tears.

W. S. Father, take courage—it appears to me that you are very pensive.

A. Do not grieve me in my old age with such questions.

W. S. Why, father?

A. O, when I think! when I remember!

W. S. Father, I entreat you, be not vexed to instruct me, your junior. You must have seen glorious things, and to think upon those things of which you are deprived, makes you so mournfully sad.

A. No human tongue can describe how pleasingly God addressed me, when I was yet in favour with him. Gen. ii. 16, 17.

W. S. Did you see God?

A. He approached me according to my weakness, in the most pleasing manner, so that I can never forget it; especially, since I see that his love to me ward is not so great ever since my disobedience. Therefore, O son, beware of disobedience, be the matter ever so small, lest the love of God depart from you.

W. S. Tell me at present a little more of paradise : of disobedience we will speak hereafter.

A. I am not able fully to tell you how pleasant and agreeable every thing appeared—the trees were regularly arranged, of variegated foliage, bearing every kind of fruit. I went from tree to tree, and did eat of each I desired—the birds were warbling and chirping on the boughs, caroling the

sweetest music : for every creature was more sprightly, while I, their head, was in my first glorious state, and had sweet fellowship with God, than afterwards ; but now they appear to groan with me, their lord. I gave them their names, each according to his quality and nature : for God gave me wisdom, that I had a knowledge of every thing under my care. The fields yielded abundantly ; I had whatsoever I desired—I had neither cares nor sorrows, nor fears ; besides, God gave me a helpmate—I loved her dearly, for she was flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone ; this I knew as soon as she was brought to me—we had much pleasure in paradise ; we never had an angry word—we lived as innocent lambs, without care or toil—we were blessed in paradise : when we had a desire to eat, we did eat—we drank of the crystal streams—the powers of our souls were glorious—we were in burning love to God as he approached us—implanted love was our very life—we knew nothing of deceit and fraud—we were not subject to frailties—we knew of no evil in the world—we lived upon the good things which God gave us—we communed more with heavenly things than we were aware of : even as a child is not so fully sensible of the love and friendship of his father while with him, as when he has lost him, neither were we so sensible of the privileged blessings we enjoyed till driven from paradise.

W. S. Father, it is astonishing, since God had endowed you so gloriously, that you suffered yourselves to be led away from your Creator, through the transgression of one single command, upon which so much depended!

A. O son, it is not to be expressed what influence the woman has over her husband, who loves her affectionately, and the more so when there appears to be some plausible reason for it; for the subtle serpent came with such enticing words, making it appear, as it were, that we would profit much by eating of the forbidden fruit. The serpent made my consort believe that we should become as wise as God; and it was on that account that he prohibited us to eat of the fruit of this tree—that it was not his desire that we should be like unto him.

W. S. O, the subtlety!

A. Her curiosity was so much excited, that she had a strong desire to eat of the fruit of the tree; besides, the tree was very pleasant to behold—she consented, and did eat. Gen. iii. 6.

W. S. O, what a sorrowful eating!

A. And with this she was not satisfied. She hastened to me with the same fair speech which she had heard from the serpent; and I perceived that it had the appearance of wisdom, and I suffered myself to be induced to eat.

W. S. What was the consequence?

A. In the selfsame hour our eyes were opened, and we saw that we were naked Gen. vii. 3. Whereupon every thing seemed to have been changed; the birds became shy and wild—the animals fierce; some ran away from us, some threatened to devour us, and were not subject to us any longer, and a few owls remained with us. The lovely sun seemed to shroud his pleasing face, even so much so, that it began to be quite cold; in short, the elements with all the creatures preached our disobedience to us, toward our CREATOR, in their withdrawing themselves from us.

W. S. O, the immense loss in such a short time!

A. All these things are but of minor importance; one thing I cannot relate without weeping.

W. S. Father, be pleased to refrain from weeping, and relate me the cause of the greater part of your sorrows.

A. O! the pleasing appearance.

W. S. What, of your consort?

A. O, no; but the lovely and agreeable presence of God, whom we were wont to praise in the morning. He was our only comfort and joy—him we must now dread; his voice, which was as agreeable music, is a voice of thunder to us now.

W. S. O, the great change!

A. Son, never sin against God ; if things appear ever so fair, in whatsoever light, matters may present themselves to you—for rest assured, death is the wages of sin, for there is no life out of God.

W. S. How did it farther go ?

A. We hid ourselves when we heard his voice, and could we have ascended to the clouds, we should have done so ; but, what would that have availed ? for none can escape the presence of God ; and though we stood before him with dejected countenance, we still thought to justify ourselves.

W. S. What, did you advance in justification of yourselves ?

A. We began to excuse ourselves. I put the blame upon my wife, and she cast the fault upon the serpent.

W. S. Did this avail any thing ?

A. What would that have availed ; it made the case only worse ; for God loves nothing less than for man not candidly to acknowledge his sins ; nevertheless, God punished us according to his justice and our deserts. First, he cursed the serpent as the originator of evil, then my wife, and finally was I punished.

W. S. How were you punished ?

A. The serpent was cursed among all creatures—upon my wife were put many pains and afflictions in bearing, as well as bringing forth children, because she abused her will and counsel toward me. She was

then bid to be obedient to me. And I, because I was not contented with paradise, was condemned in the sweat of my face to toil and labour for my bread. Gen. iii. 17. 19. As you now see how I have to maintain myself by this spade—at the plough—for the land was cursed for my sake. Afterwards the sentence was proclaimed to both of us.

W. S. O, the great punishment occasioned by a small desire after things forbidden ! But what other changes followed ?

A. At the time when our sentence was pronounced, we felt our very nature impaired and weakened, occasioned by headache, toothache, and other pains ; we were obliged to protect our bodies against heat and cold, for which purpose God first made us coats of skins. Gen. iii. 21. The ground began to bring forth thistles and thorns, choking the vegetables upon which we were to subsist ; neither would good vegetables grow spontaneously any more ; instead of the melliferous dew which made the earth fertile and productive, we had occasional rain, now and then excessive heat, so that we could provide but scantily for our natures, and that with much difficulty. The serpent looked fiendlike at us, because he had been thus humbled ; he made efforts to harm us, and with all his race became our enemy, and we his : horror and dread were between us and the other animals. My wife, who had always before

been an agreeable companion, became obstreperous when she found that she was to be subjected to me ; she was even so impotent, that we had occasional quarrelling and wrangling : I had to suffer and bear much on account of her infirmities—I had to labour with my hands, and was a partaker of her sufferings through love and the bonds of matrimony. O my son, were I to relate all the changes which were occasioned by our transgression, those of the body as well as of the soul, I should fail of mind and time.

W. S. Father, it is a wonder, since you were threatened with death, and subjected to so much misery, that you did not immediately break off from the tree of life, and eat, then you might have delivered yourself and us from death.

A. This, my son, we should have done, had not the wisdom of God barred paradise ; but this would have been nothing less than our destruction.

W. S. Why, father ?

A. Should we, through our own will have laid hold on life, nothing better would have happened us, than what befell Satan before our time : we would have been beyond redemption ; the greater the gift, the greater is sin when man revolts against God ; therefore, when God in his wisdom saw our presumption, he extended the wings of his mercy over us, and drove us from paradise, Gen.

iii. 24, 25; so that we would not make ourselves the more wretched and miserable through our own judgment, as we did in part, by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

W. S. Yet it might be said, it is better to live than to die.

A. O son, you know not what you say. God is the author of life, and he gives it out of grace to whom he will, and without his pleasure there is no life; he that loves life, must submit himself wholly to God; for he that seeks life in any other way, shall certainly find death, as it is evidently the case with Lucifer and all the ungodly; they have not life, but a fearful death—what you presumptuously think to be life, is a want of judgment on your part.

W. S. You have said enough of this, but I have to interrogate you concerning one thing. You mentioned something about a change in the soul; did a change in the soul take place by your fall?

A. Certainly, and no small one. The pleasure and joy the soul had in God, it sought afterwards in the perishable creatures of this world, even as a king who has been dethroned seeks his pleasure in the common occupations of life; nay, it has no remembrance of its former glory; hence it is, that it abuses the use of the things of this world, as long as it is not illuminated by divine

light. Meat and drink, which were created for the wants of man, are converted into gluttony and drunkenness; raiment, which was made to cover the nakedness of man, has been converted into gorgeousness and splendour; the power of generating has been changed into incontinence and lewdness, &c. Every creature is converted into different purposes for which it was created, through the blind eagerness of the soul: for in paradise nothing of this was known.

W. S. What is the cause of all this?

A. If man has once apostatized, he is deprived of the true knowledge of God; then he seeks his life in entertaining his own desires, because he knows of nothing else, unless he be again illuminated of God, and he thus gradually degenerates, until he becomes worse than irrational creatures. I have seen many instances of this kind in my time.

W. S. O father! have you experienced and seen such lamentable things?

A. Son, were I to relate to you all the changes and griefs I have experienced, it would give me renewed occasion to weep.

W. S. Although I do not like to see you weep, yet I would be delighted to hear you relate what farther happened you, in order that I might deduce a wholesome lesson from it.

A. For your sake I will do it. Not long after I was driven from paradise, my wife



Cain Slaying Abel.—pag. 16.



bare me two sons, Cain and Abel, Gen. iv. 1, 2. Of the first, we had an exalted opinion, for he was so fair to look upon, that we thought we had gotten a man of the Lord; the other was not quite so fair, and hence he was not so much esteemed by us. As they increased in years, the one became skilful in tilling the ground; the other was of a taciturn mind; he maintained himself by keeping sheep: he was very upright in all his doings. Cain began to hate his brother because he saw that he gained our affections and esteem by his honest deportment, and that God took more delight in Abel than in him; and because his own offering was rejected, he became very wroth, being of a haughty disposition; and we could visibly see from his countenance, which was much changed, that he was daily becoming more ill-natured: he never uttered an agreeable word; it was evident that he had some bad intent upon his brother, although he never revealed it to any one.

W. S. Father, you, being instructed by experience in all these things, it appears to be a matter of surprise, that you did not immediately reprove and instruct him: for such a state of things is inconsistent with fraternal love.

A. O, my son, instruction was not lacking; for I and his mother frequently told him what happened unto us, and how we should

fear and serve the Lord all our days. Neither precept nor instruction avails, if one will not take heed to his ways; and, moreover, God himself warned him to amend his life, Gen. iv. 6, 7, as he has always, in his goodness, warned many to reform, and in many ways admonished him to beware of sin; but, if Cain had only done no more than have been angry with his brother, the loss would not have been so great.

W. S. Why, father? It appears to me that you are very pensive.

A. Do be silent, for my hoary age cannot bear the burden any longer.

W. S. At the present, I will desist until you have wept a little.

A. O! I had to experience so much sorrow occasioned by my children!

W. S. What had you to experience, father?

A. The first-born of the world!

W. S. What happened?

A. O son, for thy sake, I will relate the sad story. In spite of the many salutary admonitions, he yielded to the sin of anger, and when he met his brother in the field, he began to rave and roar, to excite his hatred and malice. But as his tender brother gave him a soft answer, he grew more and more enraged, seized a weapon, and therewith he slew his brother, beat him that the blood streamed down his face upon the ground, so

much so, that he gave up his spirit to God, and left his lifeless corpse lay as a carcass, Gen. iv. 8.

W. S. O the sad story ! O the sad consequences of sin ! But what happened afterwards ?

A. At the time after he had perpetrated this atrocious deed, you should have seen Cain, how dreadfully he wrung his hands, cried, and wept : but it was too late ; he found no quiet in his conscience, he was full of fear and dread ; whenever he heard a leaf stir, he imagined that some one was in pursuit of him, to take vengeance upon him. He fled from the presence of the Lord, as one in despair and doubt, he went into a strange country.

W. S. O, but you must have been encompassed with many sorrows in relation to this sad catastrophe !

A. This you may readily imagine ; the comfort of our life we had lost : two sons as much as died in one day—the one, according to his body, the other, according to his soul, which was still the most dreadful. The mother made great lamentation when she saw her beloved son lie in his blood ; I knew not how to comfort her, for I had enough to do with myself. This tribulation was so sore and great, that it caused us to shed tears for many months, until we were blessed with another son in Abel's stead, whom we called

Seth ; and this happened when I was 940 years old. This was a fair and promising child. We had other children, but we had none that resembled me in every respect as much as did this one ; then it was, that we flattered ourselves, that God was about propagating a different race through him.

W. S. Tell me, if you please, what further befell Cain, who had fled ; did he reform afterwards ?

A. Inasmuch as I had many other children, and they, in process of time, had also children, and thus the world being populated, Cain then took himself a wife from among my first daughters, and by this means increased his race. Among others, he had a son, and called his name Enoch, Gen. iv. 19. Now, touching his reformation, concerning which you asked me, Cain was continually in great fear, from the time he murdered his brother Abel ; so much so, that he did not consider himself safe anywhere : he sought his refuge among men, and built a city in the east, which he named after his son Enoch.

W. S. Did he not pray God for the forgiveness of his sins ?

A. He well knew that his sins were too enormous to be forgiven ; therefore, he did never, with true sorrow and repentance, turn unto the Lord : he, it is true, prayed that he might be protected from homicide ; for he

imagined that the first person with whom he met would slay him.

W. S. It was a wonder, since there were no persons: and had there been any, how could they have known that Cain was a murderer?

A. He well knew that I had more children, or at least had some plausible reason to believe so; and that he might be murdered in the first or following century. And, besides, divine vengeance had implanted a dread and fear in him of being overtaken; and the much more so in this case, because he was the first murderer, and had a greater reason to doubt the forgiveness of his sins, because he had been so faithfully admonished and warned; besides this, we exhorted him daily to lead a virtuous life, and he disregarded all this, being determined to persist in his mad career. Therefore, my son, if sin entice you, no matter in what manner, and the still small voice admonishes you secretly, harden not your heart, but give place to the reproofs of conscience, and resist sin without delay, that it happen not unto you as it did unto Cain; for when the Divine light illuminates the understanding of man, sin is not so easily forgiven; nevertheless, Cain is not to be praised to doubt the efficiency of the grace of God, yet let this be a lesson to you.

W. S. Could he obtain no comfort at all of God?

A. He obtained so much of a promise, that he was not to be slain as he supposed ; and God set a mark upon him, that whosoever would slay Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. Gen. iv. 15.

W. S. How did it further go with his generation. Were there any virtuous persons, and such as feared God among them ?

A. His generation was principally a people that pursued agriculture and the mechanic arts, such as carpenters, masons, and stone-cutters. As I told you before, Cain built a city, which he called Enoch, after his son, in which his generation principally lived and maintained themselves ; but they were not instructed in virtue by their father, because he was vicious himself. His son Enoch had a child born, whom he called Irad. Gen. iv. 18. Irad begat a son, called Mehujael : and Mehujael begat Methusael, and he begat Lamech, who was the first that violated the marriage institution ; for God had ordained that a man should have but one wife ; but he took to himself two wives, Adah and Zillah, contrary to God's ordinance. Adah bare him a son, called Jabal, he was a virtuous person ; much displeased with the splendour and pride of the city ; therefore he retired to live in tents, and maintained himself as a shepherd. Lamech had another son with Adah, his name was Jubal. When he beheld the vexations and sorrows occasioned

by sin, he began to make harps and organs, to entertain the spirit of man with the music. Lamech had a son with Zillah ; him he called Tubal Cain, and a daughter, called Naomah. Tubal Cain was a wise person, an artificer in iron and brass and other metals. He excited a great desire for wealth in this world ; he knew how to extract silver and gold from other metals, and to make all kind of jewelry, which pleased every one ; and each esteemed it as a treasure ; for the wealth of these articles consists more in the estimation in which they are held than in their actual worth. But Lamech, the father of these men, did a greater evil ; to relate which would consume too much time.

W. S. Father, it appears to me that you have told enough of the posterity of Cain. I would like to know something concerning the children of Seth, your other son, whom you mentioned before. I trust I shall hear something good of him.

A. When I was two hundred and thirty-five years old, and my son Seth one hundred and five, he begat a son he called Enoch. About that time, my son Seth and my other children began publicly to preach the name of the Lord, Gen. iv. 26.

W. S. Father, why was it necessary to preach ? Was not God generally acknowledged ? Did He no longer speak unto man ?

Was the creation not sufficient evidence that there was a God?

A. O son, you have put a profitable question; it is well worthy an answer. God made his name known by his works: the creation could be seen everywhere; and, it is true, He spake with men, at times through visions, and especially through the inward monitor, the conscience; but they disregarded that with which they were become familiar; for the generation of Cain, existing upwards of a century, was so depraved through the fall, that their consciences were apparently completely seared; for their conversation was wholly concerning eating, drinking, building, marrying, and other temporal concerns pertaining to this life; and they were blinded, and their hearts hardened; nay, wholly perverted, and deaf to the voice of God, even so, that many began to doubt whether there was a God; nay, they began to blaspheme the name of God, as if they were bent upon making his name void; therefore the sons of Seth began to preach the name of God with zeal, showing the excellency and eternal duration of the name of the Lord.

W. S. Inasmuch as the generation of Cain was so blinded and hardened in heart, and disregarding the voice of God, and not knowing God by the creation of every creature, what would preaching under such circumstances avail?

A. Son, do you not know, that like produces like? Do you not know that children are induced sooner to give heed to strangers rather than to their parents? Although God teaches powerfully, and the conscience is convinced by the things of creation, nevertheless, the voice of man may frequently cause more attention, especially with those who have been inattentive; and with those who live prudently, it cannot be in vain, to establish more and more the name of the Lord, through an abundance of evidence. And furthermore, if man testify the same which God witnesses in the conscience, or through other means, it may be called the voice of God being spoken by the impulse of his Spirit. Finally, that which God teaches by the creation in the conscience, and through other means, such as visions, speaking through men, who are moved thereunto, the same in his word and doctrine, though each have its particular signification, whereby men are drawn; for it often happens, that one means is auxiliary to another, and when connected they make a harmonious concord.

W. S. You have given me much satisfaction in this matter; but, tell me, has God a name whereby he is known, since your children preached the NAME of God?

A. You ought to know, that God has such a name as he is; therefore, to preach God is nothing less than to preach his name. He

is called ALMIGHTY, because he is *almighty*; HOLY, because he is *holy*; ETERNAL, because he is *eternal*; LOVE, because he is *love*; RIGHTEOUS, because he is *righteous*, &c. &c. All his attributes are as his names. Therefore, his name is profaned and denied when the image of his being is defaced in man through sin. God wills that his name be glorified and praised in man; therefore, it is necessary to preach the name of God, to build it up when we see his name made nought by all the sins of men.

W. S. Father, tell me more concerning the posterity of Seth?

A. When I was three hundred and twenty-five years old, and Enos was ninety years, he begat a son, and called him Cainan. Gen. v. 9. And when Cainan had lived seventy years, he had a son whom he called Mahalaleel, v. 12, and when he was sixty-five, he begat a son, and called him Irad. Gen. v. 15. At that time, I was four hundred and sixty years old.

W. S. O father, many must have been the difficulties and trials which befell you during that period!

A. It is not to be described, and it is painful for me to relate. I will relate but a few of the leading ones. Were I to relate every thing, touching each child that was born, the marriages contracted, the quarrels which arose and were quelled, the numberless times

that they came to me to consult me, for they generally came to me as the senior among them : nay, were I to relate every thing concerning the great vicissitudes of this world, the changes of customs and manners, the revolutions of the creation, and the outward and inward temptations and trials I had—were I to relate all these things, time would fail me.

W. S. One thing I have to ask you.

A. What is that, my son ?

W. S. The sons of Seth, whom you have mentioned, were they all pious men, and did they all preach ?

A. They were all men as pillars, and preached the name of the Lord. They came frequently to me, to ask me concerning things that had transpired, and I concealed nothing from them, but I told them any thing they desired to know.

W. S. Did the posterity of Cain reform ?

A. Alas ! his posterity became worse and worse from time to time. Of Lamech, whom I mentioned before, wonders could be related.

W. S. What then, father ?

A. A history too lamentable !

W. S. If you please, let me hear it.

A. As I said, that he transgressed the instituted marriage ordinance, moreover, he was of a hasty temper, and very ill-natured : and, it is very evident, that the vengeance of God was impending over Cain, which he

brought upon himself by murdering his brother Abel ; and, it so happened, that this Lamech could not forget the murdering of Abel. He, therefore, rose up against Cain and slew him, and measured unto him with the same measure that he measured unto Abel ; and, he also slew a young man ; for where anger has once gained ground, it will always be the cause of more evil, and when he was reproved of his conscience of what he had done, he revealed it unto his wives, Adah and Zillah. Whereupon, he was immediately avenged by the favourites of Cain, for they avenged the death of their father sevenfold ; and since murder was in vogue, others again avenged the death of Lamech seventy times sevenfold. This was the Divine vengeance consequent upon shedding the innocent blood of Abel, because the posterity of Cain did not reform on hearing the word of God preached.

W. S. I perceive, by your discourse, that this generation increased exceedingly in wickedness.

A. So exceedingly, that if God does not in a special manner interfere, it is to be feared that the whole world will become corrupted ; however, I am now old, and near the close of my life, and I shall not live to see that event.

W. S. I thought that they were quite subtle, circumspect, and wise men, and of great

understanding. How did it come that they increased so much in wickedness ?

A. Their acuteness was only in temporal things, in the discovery of invention, to build cities, dividing of lands and making them their own, which they acquired from Cain. Before, nothing of that was known. How to exercise authority, to kill, murder, and the like evils, to maintain these things according to their conceived notions of justice, is what they called great wisdom. This they did to make one believe that their prerogatives were great.

W. S. O the great decline ! the ruin !

A. Man is brought to such a situation when he departs from God, and seeks his pleasure in things temporal.

W. S. How does this happen, father ?

A. O son, because man does not know God in his glorious ways ; because, he that knows God, for him it is impossible to seek his pleasure in the creatures of this world. How is it possible that man would reject gold, and prefer the mire of the earth, unless it be that he does not know the difference, or has no knowledge of either ? In like manner, were these drowned in the sink of murder through their ignorance, and they spend the powers of their souls therein ; and the longer they persist, the deeper will they sink into it, and become more and more perverse.

W. S. O the imminent danger ! What will this tend to ?

A. As long as a man does not know that he is wicked, it is impossible to advise him.

W. S. How can one attain to this knowledge ?

A. If a man be on his proper guard, and resist not the light of God. For God at all times leaves some knowledge of himself in man, whereby he is reproved of sin. I and my wife were warned before we transgressed in paradise. Cain was also warned before he slew his brother. These are also daily warned by preaching and other means ; but to be regardless of all brings ruin upon man, and heaps sin upon sin.

W. S. Father, I perceive, by your words, that if one does not reform, he increases in wickedness, and finally comes into a state of obdurate impenitency.

A. Certainly, that is my opinion.

W. S. On the contrary, can a person, if he regard himself, and give heed to the things of God, attain to such a degree of virtue, that he will always do the things of God, and never turn unto sin ?

A. To be sure, if he believe steadfastly in God : for by faith a man is acceptable to God, and he overcomes the world.

W. S. O this is something precious—important !

A. There is a man now living, who lived many years in the divine life, and has come to such a state of perfection, that he is more like an angel than man.

W. S. Father, what do you say?

A. It is true what I am telling you ; he is so friendly and amiable, and so virtuous, charitable, merciful, pure, and just, that it is a pleasure to behold him ; but, withal, he reproves sin, and preaches very zealously of the eternal God.

W. S. And yet a man ?

A. To be sure he is a man, even as we are. I knew his father and mother.

W. S. Of whose posterity is he ?

A. Of Seth's, of which I related you before, until Jared was born, if you remember it.

W. S. I remember it well.

A. This same Jared is his father ; for when he was 162 years old, he had this blessed son born. Gen. v. 18.

W. S. What might be the name of this blessed and pious man ?

A. His name is Enoch.

W. S. He must be considerably advanced in years, according to what you say.

A. He is now 307 years old, for I was 622 years old when he was born, and I am now almost 930 years of age, when the sun enters the sign Aries, who is now in Cancer.

W. S. Has he any children ?

A. Yes ; and among them he has one,

Methuselah, whom he begat when he was 65 years of age. He was a son of fine appearance. This Methuselah had also a son when he was 187 years old, who was called Lamech, Gen. v. 25; but of quite a different disposition of the other Lamech, of Cain's descendants, of whom I told you that he slew Cain, and who was afterwards murdered, and avenged seventy times sevenfold. I say he was of quite a different disposition: he excelled so much in piety, as the other Lamech did in wickedness. He is now about 57 years of age, and is a promising youth.

W. S. Father, please tell me something more of the life of the pious Enoch;—my heart exults to hear of him!

A. He has ever, from his youth, been amiable, and feared God; especially after he begat Methuselah, he resolved to be wholly dedicated to God, and devote all his powers of body and mind to the service of God. He visited me frequently, and interrogated me concerning many things; for he took particular notice of the creation—of the revelation of God—of every thing that had any the least tendency to the reformation of life, and of the Divine Being: and when I told him of the joys of paradise, what we saw and heard there, and the friendship God manifested to-us-ward, he was ardently excited to know more concerning it; and it grieved him exceedingly, that we were so indifferent in

regard to divine things. O ! were I to tell you of the many nights we spent together, forgetting to eat, drink, or sleep—how he called upon God his Creator, loved the immortal Being, and had a confident hope to enjoy him. The faith of this young man is certainly not vain : for by faith we accomplish things that appear to be impossible to be done. For the things he expects appear impossible to follow ; for, if I am allowed to express my views, he has always had quite a different way from ours ; for he depended wholly upon the power of the Almighty, to whom all things must be subjected.

W. S. Father, methinks this man must have exceeded you in faith, although he is younger than you. But, tell me, did he also preach unto Cain's posterity ?

A. Yes, he did, and with much zeal too. He exhorted them to observe the times, which even the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field do, distinguishing summer from winter, and suiting themselves to the change of seasons. He advised them to repent : he reprobated and threatened them—expostulated with them—telling them that God would come with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Jud. xiv. 15.

W. S. I well perceive, that this man also had the spirit of prophecy, and knew to foretell remarkable things. But I have heard of those stiff-necked sinners. How am I to understand that, father? God is mightier than sinners; what can their stiff-neckedness harm him?

A. God is a precious and amiable Being, who wishes to dwell with friendship in their hearts, and implant the seeds of virtue. Because the ungodly are pertuberous, quarrelsome, haughty, and proud, that peaceable Being departs from their hearts, so that they, through their blindness, cannot cherish the word in a meek heart, whereby they might be saved. And, moreover, the ungodly are generally very much opposed to the blessed messengers of God, who offer them most persuasively the love and friendship of God. For all these things they must suffer punishment, because they were so refractory and opposed to God, and have dispelled his Spirit from their hearts, when he would have abode with them in love.

W. S. Tell me, father, how was the posterity of Cain pleased with this man's manner of life, and his doctrine; could they in any way agree with him?

A. This generation is so much engaged in temporal things, and so bent upon becoming wealthy, since Tubal Cain discovered how to extract gold—and being encumbered

in agriculture—building—so that the greater part of them take no time to hear him preach. The voluptuous hate him ; others count him as worthless, because he lived in a mean cottage, like the one I have, and his clothes were not made fashionable, serving only to cover his nakedness, to protect him from heat and cold. Others considered him as melancholy, because he spent much time alone in meditating in the field ; so that his preaching did but little good among this generation. But, among the posterity of Seth, he is a great comfort to the believers : he encouraged them, he admonished them to do good ; he set them a good example by his life, and was very serviceable to them in many things. When he preached, he was surrounded by a great multitude of men, women, and children, that it was a pleasure to behold them. Frequently he preached in their houses—oft in the groves—upon the mountains—at the water-side—according to the exigencies of circumstances ; yet, he was, withal, much for retirement, endeavouring how he might serve God most acceptably.

W. S. Father, you relate some remarkable things. You are telling me of mean cottages. I perceive that yours is beginning to decay ; why do you not live in as large, new, and finely built house, as the children of Cain ?

A. Son, why should we, who are pilgrims

here, have such costly and superb buildings; one day we are here, and another, there. It would be quite as arduous for us to have so much to do with such stately palaces; we do not feel disposed to make so much ado of the things of this world; we are looking for a better one; we look for a city whose builder and maker is God. It is quite different with the posterity of Cain. Here they are citizens, and have their lot upon earth; and, as they have not to expect any better part, God permits them to enjoy themselves here; but we have no desire for these things. If we have meat and drink, we are content therewith. And, were we to set our hearts and desires upon the things of this world, I should have the best right to own and claim all as mine; for I am the first created of all; but, I trust, that these things will never engross my attention.

W. S. Do others also come to visit you besides the pious Enoch?

A. O yes, my children do, and especially Seth and his posterity. It were too tedious, and it would consume too much time to tell you, with what reverence they honour me; and how agreeably we spend our time in conversation—the lessons of virtue which I taught them—their moral deportment and godly life—the prayers and other interesting exercises and offices of love and friendship which they exercise one toward another. I

say, to relate all these things would consume too much time ; but you may readily imagine how we spend our time, when I, an old father, give instruction to so many children surrounding me.

W. S. Father, what hear I ? Do all your children yet live ?

A. Of all my children and grandchildren, not one of them has died, whom I mentioned to you ; and moreover, in the course of so many years, they have separated into many great nations, as you may see from the surrounding countries, which are well peopled ; and others have migrated into more distant parts of the world, to inhabit it, and to spread abroad the name of God.

W. S. Why is it that you esteem the posterity of Seth so much ?—there are, perhaps, other children of yours, who have pious sons and daughters ?

A. O, my son, it is not to be told what blessings the world is to receive through this generation of this excellent man among them, so that it appears that God made choice of this generation to make known the wonders of his goodness. God also said, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, which seed we look for to descend from this generation.

W. S. You told me before, that there was enmity between you and the seed of the ser-

pent, and wherever you can, you kill the serpent.

A. O son, you do not understand the mysteries of the word of God. It is true, that after the fall, there was a natural enmity existing between me and the living serpent, and that we kill him, we, as well as the posterity of Cain does. But there is also a spiritual serpent, the head of this serpent is not bruised than only by the Divine offspring of Seth, whom God gave in place of Abel.

W. S. Father, you tell me wonderful things. What is this spiritual serpent?

A. It is the devil, who may justly be called the old serpent, for he is much older than any common serpent, and his seed is sin ; and the subduing of him is death.

W. S. Have you not, on the other hand, a subduing power over sin ?

A. We have, to be sure, an everlasting hatred against sin ; but this serpent will not be wholly subdued, only by Him whom God has promised to Seth's posterity, and who is to appear in the fulness of time.

W. S. Is there also a spiritual paradise, as there is a spiritual serpent ?

A. Certainly, there is a spiritual paradise, for all visible and natural things have their invisible and spiritual reality.

W. S. Where is this spiritual paradise ?

A. Even as the terrestrial paradise was in

the best part of the world, so in like manner is the spiritual paradise in the most noble part of man, who is the head of all creation, representing the whole world.

W. S. Which is the most noble part of man?

A. The heart; for out of it are the issues of life. Man was first placed in this paradise, to cultivate and to keep it; for God let the stream of life flow into it, to irrigate the whole, which divides itself into four principal streams, making every thing fertile; so that it produced all manner of fruit.

W. S. I perceive that it is of the utmost importance that this garden be well cultivated?

A. If I and my wife had taken good care of this spiritual paradise, we should never have been driven from the earthly paradise. But my woman was deceived by the lust of the eye, and was induced to eat of the forbidden fruit, and we did eat spiritually of the forbidden tree of the spiritual paradise.

W. S. What is the forbidden tree of the spiritual paradise?

A. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which many have eaten so much, that they can never come to the tree of life, for life does not consist in knowledge; but man attains it in simplicity, that he may enjoy the goodness of God; therefore, my son, when the subtle serpent cunningly comes

to you, recommending that tree, and telling you that by tasting of it, you can become as God, be not deceived by his finesse, but be humble and fear God ; for the knowledge of good and evil, although it be pleasant to be hold, leads from the life which is in God, who would rather that we should forget all behind us and fix our eyes upon him, that we may be strengthened and increase to grow to a full stature of knowledge in him.

W. S. I certainly believe that a knowledge of evil has no good tendency ; and I believe a knowledge of good is indispensably necessary.

A. Whenever the serpent has raised or started evil, it is necessary also to know the good, so that a person be not deceived by evil. But there is something more precious than knowledge.

W. S. What is that, father ?

A. Love, charity.

W. S. How can I love that of which I have no knowledge ?

A. Love is within you, and if you never commit or do any thing evil, then it will not be necessary for you to learn to know love.

W. S. I must certainly increase in love.

A. God, who is the author of love, will increase it in you, provided you cultivate with care and attention the inward garden.

W. S. How does that take place ?

A. You will have to close well the hedge,

so that all manner of wild beasts, such as lions, bears, the wild boar, &c. &c. be kept out of it. These are wild, unclean, and destructive thoughts, which arise out of impure desires; these you must lop off close, and not suffer them to sprout any the least in your precious and noble soul, for they would destroy and choke every thing, destroy the tender germs which put forth spiritually; nay, root them up, and convert the pleasant garden into a wilderness. But, on the contrary, if you be vigilant, and keep secure every entrance, the pleasant plants, and especially the tree of life, will increase more and more within you; for the melliferous dew of Divine grace will continually moisten the spiritual field, and make it fertile; so that it will become a glorious and a pleasant garden.

W. S. I thank you, father, for this wholesome instruction. But, tell me, is there also another paradise?

A. There is also a heavenly paradise, with which this is intimately connected. The one of which we spoke last is only earthly: this is spiritual; it is a paradise into which Enoch expects to enter. Touching myself, I cannot say that I have a perfect knowledge of it, but when God will send the promised seed of the woman, he will give full instruction concerning it. I hope that he (though I will not live to see him) will make amends for all; heal the wound which the serpent

occasioned, and convey me and you, my son, after we have suffered tribulation and affliction, and bring us safe into eternal life, out of his great mercy and goodness. This is my earnest desire and expectation; inasmuch as I had a foretaste thereof in the terrestrial paradise, where all things were so good and perfect, that there remained nothing to be desired for; and the celestial paradise will be found in all things in greater perfection. And now it is time that I prepare myself, in order that I may be received into the celestial mansions of bliss.

DIALOGUE II.

THE WANDERING SOUL WITH THE PATRIARCH NOAH; COMPRISING A PERIOD OF 1077 YEARS.

Wandering Soul. MORE than a thousand years have elapsed since I conversed with Adam, who gave me an interesting account of many things, especially of such as happened during his life; and, since I see the world changed in many things, and observed all these things as a *wandering soul*, I am curious to know what happened during this period of time, and as I can do no better than

to ask the oldest whom I can find, concerning these things ; for they generally have experience : whereas, with the young, theirs is much hearsay. Methinks I have found a reverend aged person, who can satisfy my curiosity ; and as I have understood that Noah is still in this part of the world, it may be that this is he :—therefore, I greet you, aged father. May the grace of God be with you.

Noah. I thank you, my son, for your salutation. I have always enjoyed this grace from my youth up, and it has never departed from me.

W. S. This is something holy and admirable !

N. You may well say so, because this is seldom the case ; yet God alone is entitled to the praise and honour.

W. S. Father, your appearance tells me that you have lived many years : nay, perhaps, there is none like you.

N. You are right in that, my son, for I am now nearly 950 years old. I remember many of the patriarchs of the antediluvian world, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel. I also knew the aged Methuselah, than whom none was older, and none will be ; for I do not think to live so long, although I have attained his age, within twenty years.

W. S. You are telling wonderful things ; the more so, because you appear to be so very

hearty and well, for the aged are generally subjected to many frailties. Your eyes appear to be very clear; your hearing is quite good, although you make use of a staff; but that is no wonder, because middle-aged have oft to lean upon a staff; and how much more should one that is so very old as I hear you say that you are. But tell me, have you not known Adam?

N. No, for he died 126 years before I was born; but my father Lamech knew him well. He was 56 years old when Adam died, of whom I heard many fine things related.

W. S. Certainly you have attained an advanced age, but what does that signify?—it is appointed for man once to die, and were he to live thousands of years.

N. What do you say, die? He enters into a better life through a temporal death, of which the blessed Enoch is a type, a pattern; who, after walking 300 years with God, was translated into heaven. Gen. v. 24.

W. S. Father, what do you say?

N. It is true what I tell you, for my father knew Enoch well; he was about 130 years old when that took place, and I have conversed with many others who testify that they saw him ascend.

W. S. That must have been something remarkable!

N. My son, were I to relate all the wonders which have been told me of this man—

of his life, of his zeal, of his love, of his faith in God, of his holy and devout exercises, and finally, of his remarkable translation, or ascension into heaven—many were looking upon it: some, who did not believe this, were seeking for him high and low; some wept for the loss of his company, others rejoiced that he was no more, for he was salt to the earth: others took particular notice of the place where he was last seen, which has been shown to me—the different stories concerning this man—some attested to the truth of the fact, others gainsayed what was asserted. I say, were I to relate all, from the beginning to the end, time would not only be wanting, but I should fail in strength to do so.

W. S. Father, do not trouble yourself so much: I am satisfied to see that you are willing, and I understand the truth of the matter. But what comfort does this translation (ascension) afford you? For all the other fathers died, and none of them was thus translated into heaven, as Enoch.

N. Much comfort indeed. For in the first place, we see that there is a dwelling place in heaven for the saints, even as Enoch himself declared in his day. Secondly, we see the power of faith, which overcomes death; for our father Adam, although he died according to the flesh, had always some comfort, and a strong hope of everlasting life;

for God is eternal, of whom he received the spirit; therefore he had a hope of eternal things—he preached the name of God, and comforted the afflicted; and when this witness of eternal things is confirmed by the revelation of God through Enoch, we believe more implicitly to enjoy a heavenly blessedness, notwithstanding our bodies return to dust, out of which they were formed; for God may or he may not make us happy with it or without it; however, we have seen in the case of Enoch, that he can do it if he sees fit; we believe that he will give all who love him an equal blessedness, being children of one father; and we also feel in the spirit of our minds a glorious life increasing, and the more so, as the lusts of the flesh are mortified. Therefore, I repeat it, that the laying down of this body is nothing else than an entrance into a better life, which God in future will fully reveal unto us.

W. S. I will acquiesce in this; but I am anxious to know what befell you, for you say that you have lived many centuries; and since all things change, it follows by consequence that you know much to relate.

N. O son, were I to relate every thing minutely, which I have seen and heard, it would require a century. I did not only live many years, but have lived to see *two worlds*. Further, were I to attempt to think of all things past, tribulations would seize

hold of me in the very attempt to think upon certain things, that I should not be able to accomplish it ; it will therefore be more advisable to say not so much concerning it now.

W. S. Father, I will not burden you too much, but be satisfied if you will tell me something summarily, so that I may derive some salutary lessons from your narration.

N. Were I not persuaded that you are desirous of hearing to profit thereby, I would tell you nothing ; but now I will, as leisure will allow me, tell you some remarkable things.

W. S. Before you proceed any further in your narrative, yonder I see a very aged and reverend person ; and, at his side, is a very anxious youth ; who, as appears, is receiving instruction : who are they ?

N. It is my son Shem, who is now 446 years old ; the young man's name is Abraham, who is 65 years old. He is very anxious to examine every thing—he comes frequently to my son and to myself ; then I tell him of many things which happened, and he oft forgets his meal in giving heed to things related, that it affords him much interest, as you may readily perceive by his attentiveness.

W. S. Father, you excite my curiosity more and more—there must be some things very remarkable !

N. Yes indeed ! many more than could be

comprised in many volumes. A few of them I will relate.

W. S. I will listen attentively.

N. When I was born, in the 182d of my father Lamech's age, Gen. v. 28, fourteen years after the death of Seth, whose death caused him much grief; yet he had some well grounded hopes of me, that I would be a great comfort to him, and to all the children of God. My actions pleased him so well, that he called me Noah; for they all groaned exceedingly, not only by reason of the great labour which it required to till the ground, but also because iniquity increased and abounded exceedingly among Cain's posterity, who cared for nothing else than to increase their number, and enjoy the good things of this world. Whereas, on the contrary, they who delighted in the divine life, and called the children of God, being the children and posterity of Seth, of whom I also descended, preached the word of God, and admonished each other, so that they would not follow the wicked course of life which the heedless children of Cain did, who sought their gain and pleasure in the enjoyment of the world.

W. S. Did not God say, be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth? And were they not to till the ground to maintain themselves?

N. Yes, this might and ought to be; but

God has also endowed man with a precious soul ; this then ought to have its culture and improvement too ; and unless this be cultivated and improved, it will die as we may see in other creatures. Nothing can increase, if more of its powers evanesce than increase, which is the same with the soul, when its precious powers are weakened by the lusts of this world, for the seeing, hearing, and the other senses detract from the soul that which constitutes its life, and thereby perishes, and it cannot enjoy its part of the command, "be fruitful and multiply :" however, this has only relation to the flesh, out of which there will ultimately arise a general devastation.

W. S. How am I to understand this ?

N. When the powers of the mind become feebler, and the will is subjected to the flesh, then man is tossed like a ship without a rudder, though by the winds of the affections, out of which rise incontinence, murder, excess in eating and drinking, hatred, and the like evil things, whereby the body as well as the mind is impaired, and leads to a general departure of the original design for which we were created. God, created man to live righteously and godly in love, and indeed that he might live for ever, and not like the beasts which perish. Now all who do not regard the divine life for which they were created, but degrade themselves so

much, that they are like the beasts, are called the children of men.

W. S. Pray, cannot the children of God convert the children of men by their preaching?

N. Alas! how should they convert others, they were themselves—themselves—

W. S. Father, it appears to me that you cannot speak well.

N. Have succeeded, and that after some time, and especially when the patriarchs began to die.

W. S. Father, take courage.

N. O the mighty! O the mighty! how they have fallen!

W. S. I perceive, by your conversation, that we have cause to shed tears for them.

N. I knew many of them upon whom one might built churches, as to their external appearance; they were leaders, acute and wise, could preach the name of God as if they were angels, appeared to be very polite and moral; nay, almost blameless: but what were they? they fell as stars from heaven, or were swept away as by a flood.

W. S. O, how lamentable!

N. Do you see an eminence to the right of you, at a great distance?

W. S. I see it.

N. There was formerly a splendid city there; but it has been long since demolished

by the flood. In that city there lived a man of our tribe ; he was an excellent man—he owned much sheep and cattle, and had promising sons and daughters. He came frequently to me, and we had many a conversation on divine things, especially on the lives of our forefathers, and how the world is now decayed and ruined : and he was often astonished that he was so indifferent in regard to religion ; nay, he reproved and instructed others that were straying from the true way. He was not inexperienced in natural philosophy : in short, he seemed to be a proficient in many things, in religion as well as in other things, and on that account, he was very welcome with me. It happened that his consort died ; she was very pious—he associated with me—he felt no disposition for a long time to marry again ; but he changed his views on that subject ; I warned him not to marry one of Cain's posterity, as it was the custom of the day. He appeared to have regard to my admonitions at first ; but to my astonishment, he cast his eyes upon a young woman whose father was a wealthy citizen of the city of Enoch, of which there does not a single stone remain. Now he began gradually to avoid my company, and whenever I would expostulate with him on the subject of getting married, he seemed to think that one might marry whom he pleased, if he would not depart from God.

O, thought I, it is enough when one begins to turn his back to the Spirit of God, which draws us so pleasingly. Adieu, adieu, my friend, you will now sink into the murder pool of this world.

W. S. Father, of what was he deprived by taking to himself a strange woman?

N. This you shall presently hear: As soon as he was joined with her in matrimony, he came no more to me—his zeal was wholly abated; the Canaanitish woman soon began to introduce her corrupt manners and morals: the children altered the fashion of their dress; they began to eat and drink to excess; their whole conversation was of buying and selling, of feeding cattle, of making money, of hoarding up wealth for their children, instead of giving to the poor what used to remain; they seemed to get into want themselves. A house is wanted to be built—a chamber to be furnished, or there was a certain tract of land which was to be purchased, or something else that required money; in short, the man who was before as a coal of fire, became cold; he loved the things of this world too much. It was lamentable and heartrending for me to see all this.

W. S. The man should have remained steadfast, and his marriage would not have been detrimental to him.

N. Believe me, son, he that cannot subdue his desires while the Spirit is strong in him,

and the opportunities for temptation but few, that he will be able to do it much less when the Spirit is smothered—yea, wholly driven away—and the opportunities of temptation on every side powerful. Therefore does the Spirit of God counsel every one to watch and pray, lest he fall into temptation; and does not regard this counselling and perish.

W. S. It was certainly painful to lose such a valuable friend.

N. O, that would have been nothing, had he only continued thus.

W. S. I perceive, from your conversation, that he increased in wickedness daily !

N. Certainly, he became worse; for when his children were grown up, they also married according to their own desires; and, as he was a man of some notoriety, they imitated his example; for every one said, if he may do those things I may also do them: and thus, in process of time, the children of God were declining in piety, because they looked upon the fair daughters of men. Gen. vi. 2.

W. S. Were there no fair and virtuous women among the children of God?

N. According to appearance they were as fair as others; but they did not adorn themselves much with gold and fine apparel. They were satisfied that they were adorned with the quiet and meek spirit in the inner man; therefore, they were not so highly esteemed as the daughters of Cain, who were

constantly altering and changing their dress; following the fashions of that day. The consequence was, that when the daughters of the pious saw themselves forsaken of men, they did also imitate the fashions, so that this stream of evil overwhelmed the pious more and more.

W. S. What a calamitous stream! It is a wonder that you were not carried off by it!

N. Touching myself, I do not know that I ever changed myself externally or internally, but always was satisfied with simplicity and piety. I am always contemplating divine things—how God punishes the evil and rewards the good—concerning which I speak and preach much. I thought much on the pious examples of our ancestors. I had a refuge to, and great deal of comfort with Jared. Father Enoch, who told me much of his son's virtue and piety, was great comfort to me: when I think of his conduct I am rejoiced; but he died in his 962d year, when I was but 366 years old. Gen. v. 20. From that time the world became more wicked; for there were daily so many falling off, that I thought I should be left alone. I could scarcely persuade myself to get married, because I feared that my children might also be led away; so that I was nearly 500 years old when my first children were born. Gen. v. 31.

W. S. Thus I perceive, that you have seen

a great deal of indescribable human wo and misery.

N. Oh, son ! I have only related one instance out of a thousand, so that you may form some idea of the great decline. It would be impossible to relate all I have seen, and it is unnecessary to trouble you therewith ; but you ought to know that their marrying according to the lusts of the flesh was the cause of many consequent evils.

W. S. Father, be pleased to tell me something of those evils.

N. It is with much difficulty that I can relate them, on account of my overwhelming griefs !

W. S. I well believe it, that it is painful for you ; but for my sake, be pleased to relate as much as may be agreeable with your own feelings.

N. When men had rejected the salutary movings of the Spirit of God, the Spirit departed from the soul with all its illuminating influences ; and then the wickedness of men abounded more and more, so that not only matrimony was entered into contrary to the will of God, but lewdness and murder became a common thing ; for from the illicit connexion of the children of God with the children of the world, giants were produced—men of enormous stature, mighty, wealthy, and cruel tyrants (Gen. v. 4), whose will none could resist ; and thus, the whole world

became rude and barbarous. All became corrupted ; wickedness was so great that the brutes themselves became more cruel.

W. S. Two questions present themselves; will you please to answer them.

N. What are they ? Let me hear them.

W. S. The first is : Why those who were born from the above-mentioned connexion, were more powerful, more notorious, wiser, and more wicked, than those formerly of Cain's generation only ?

N. This I will tell you. Those of Cain's generation before had some fear and respect for the children of God ; they heard preaching occasionally—had some respect for Adam, Enoch, and several others—were only a part of the people of the world, as those of Seth's were a part ; therefore, neither the one nor the other could become the dominant party. But when they formed a connexion, they had all things in common : the riches, splendour, wickedness, and lewdness of the generation of Cain, were co-mingled with the wisdom, the manners, and politeness of Seth ; so that those who were born now cared not, or had little regard for any one ; and under the pretext of godliness, they could commit acts of cruelty and tyranny—being the descendants of Seth, and therefore knowing what to do or to leave undone as well as any one could inform them ; and, for that reason, they held imperial diets in order to pass edicts to en-

slave others, or to practise intrigue upon them—to make them labour in building palaces and planting and rearing pleasure-gardens; nay, to add plantation to plantation, and to enjoy themselves in all manner of sinful amusements, such as riding, running horses, surfeiting, eating, lewdness, and all manner of libertinism, without once thinking of the majesty of God, or any respect for his ministers, so that they could be lords and masters.

W. S. You satisfied me in this: but as you told me that the brutes had become more rude by the examples of these ungodly men, please tell me how that came to pass. This is the other question.

N. Give heed, my son! Instead of being lord to rule all things becomingly, man began to gratify himself; to chase different animals, to hunt them down with horses and dogs, was a favourite sport. Nay, different animals were brought together to fight with each other; such as the lion to fight the bear, the leopard the wild-swine; yea, they set dogs at one another, and cocks that they killed each other. By this boisterous conduct of man, the forests resounded with the roaring of infuriated animals, and the more innocent animals fled for fear; and the birds of the air were not secure from man. Thus did the animals become more rude through the wickedness of man.

W. S. O, how grievous this must have been to the Creator, who out of pure love created all things good, that man might be a partaker of his goodness, and that all might live in harmony and peace, each in his proper sphere !

N. O, son, it is not to be expressed, how grieved God looked down upon man from heaven ; even as a father looking upon his family, and seeing them all dispersed and disobedient, yet, moved with compassion, and unwilling to punish them immediately, but remembering that they are flesh and blood, and not being obedient to his Spirit, he gave them space to repent—namely, 120 years—(Gen. vi. 3)—which he proclaimed unto them through me. This I did when I was 480 years of age. About twenty years afterwards I had three sons born unto me ; namely, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, all of whom I brought up with much solicitude ; instructed them continually, so that they would not be led astray by the wickedness of the world, and be lost.

W. S. This was long forbearance of God, that he did wait so patiently for them to repent.

N. God desires not the death of the sinner, but that he repent and live ; and when he punishes, he does it not out of hatred, but out of compassion and love towards man, so that he may be brought to repentance.

W. S. No doubt you preached zealously during this time that man should repent.

N. Not with indifference did I give the alarm, but I called with a loud voice that they should reform themselves. I entreated them with tears—I threatened them with the judgments of God—I recounted the examples of our forefathers. Especially did I mention Enoch—how he had prophesied of the denunciations of God; and how Adam had foretold that the world would perish; and to that end there were two pillars erected which would withstand the effects of water and fire, which displayed some knowledge of astronomy. In addition to this, I told them of the heinousness of sin; that God would certainly not leave it unpunished. On the contrary, I told them of the amiableness of virtue; and what great gain it was to walk in the love of God. I preached unto them on every proper occasion; in the fields, in houses, in the market-places, in companies; at any place where I could find hearers I lifted my voice; for the love I had for them so constrained me to preach unto them, where and whenever I had an opportunity. I preached of the righteousness and justice of God. It often happened that when preaching, and surrounded by the old fathers and a crowd of people, that some were affected and shed tears; for I addressed them so affectionately: and this I did all to rescue them from the impending destruction.

W. S. Since you did exert yourself so much to preach to them, did they reform, or did they persist in wickedness?

N. The longer—the worse they became!

W. S. O, how lamentable; it is wonderful!

N. Do you think so, son?

W. S. Is it not astonishing that they should have heard all those fine sermons, and not reform or repent?

N. It is strange indeed that men should act so foolishly! but when a sinner has once become hardened, sermons will never profit him any thing; they will never convert him unless he give heed to the voice of God in his heart. He will necessarily become more corrupted; wickedness increases in him as a fruitful seed sown in fertile ground.

W. S. Your observation is perfectly true!

N. That is the reason why the world became more wicked. Some who at first appeared to pay a little attention to the preached word, became so accustomed to it, that they also despised it; saying, we knew long ago what he preached. Others said, let him boast as he may, we do what we please. Others again were wholly taken up with trafficking, sowing their fields, wasting their time in voluptuousness—so that they had no desire to hear preaching. Others again were carousing, drinking, singing, quarrelling, and fighting; thus here and there were some lying dead. Neither justice nor equity was re-

garded. Every one avenged himself as he could ; and thus the land was filled with wantonness and abomination ! Yes, my dear son, were I to relate to you all the howling and huzzaing which resounded in the streets, occasioned by these ungodly, rude young men, you would hear astonishing things ! Oftentimes did I lock my door on them. My father was afraid they would kill me, and would not suffer me to open the door for them. At one time the cry of murder was heard : at another, they were singing and dancing— all manner of wickedness was going on. It was painful for me to see such riotous and tumultuous scenes of revelry !

W. S. How painful it must have been for the pious to witness such scenes of riot !

N. Among others, the venerable Methusaleh was to be pitied : he was sitting in his cottage sighing on account of the wickedness of man. He was about 900 years old, and had his cottage on an eminence, and resided about a day's journey from me. He was a respectable old man, down whose furrowed cheek ran floods of tears when he would think on the wickedness of man. I frequently comforted him, for he was my grandfather.

W. S. If man, who possesses but a latent spark of the Divinity, is so much affected and grieved when witnessing these scenes of human depravity, how must the immaculate Divine Being have been affected on account

of the obduracy and impenitence of these sinners !

N. O, my son, when I think upon it, how the paternal heart was affected when beholding his children go to destruction—I say, when I think upon it, my heart is pierced with sorrow !

W. S. Father, I am sorry that I make you so sad.

N. Speak on.

W. S. If you have recovered in spirits, please to proceed with the history you commenced.

N. When God saw that all his goodness was disregarded, and that wickedness abounded more and more, he became sorrowful, and said, I repent that I made man !

W. S. O, what a sad state of things, when God repented of his own works !

N. True. God did not complain of his own works, which were of themselves good ; but of the sad state of things whereby his works were unhallowed : therefore, he determined to destroy the whole human race, together with every thing which had life, and only preserve so much seed as to replenish the earth, so that his design in creating man would not be wholly frustrated.

W. S. O, the Divine wisdom !

N. God had such a love for future posterities, that he determined not to destroy the whole race ; yet his justice required, that

those should perish who did despise his mercies, and would not reform.

W. S. Was this his just grievance not made known to the children of men?

N. Certainly. Besides my telling them daily thereof, it was also discernible at the heavens that God was displeased at the inhabitants of the earth: the sun often appeared cloudy and pensive—the moon, as blood; earthquakes were often; tremendous hurricanes; days big with lowering clouds; heat and famine; frightful comets; all were threatening the world; besides the many epidemical deceases, such as fever, the plague, &c.: and thus God left them not without a witness that he would destroy the people of the world; but, notwithstanding all these threats, they swelled the list of their crimes and wickedness!

W. S. How could it be, that all those signs of threatenings did not cause them to fear?

N. There ever were interpreters and expounders who attributed all to nature in her operations. They said that the sun and moon appearing sad or pensive was owing to certain causes of the atmosphere; the earthquakes were caused by subterraneous confined winds; the comets were occasioned in the air, owing to a superabundance of dry materials being ignited there: clouds, wind, famines, epidemics, and the like, they attri-

buted to nature ; saying, that God does not concern himself about the human family ; that when he created man he was then to be governed by the laws of nature : hence it is, that whatsoever befell mankind, was for their benefit ; yet it was never intended that these things were to be portentous of evil.

W. S. O, the great heedlessness of man !

N. Ultimately God commanded me to build an ark like a great ship, three hundred cubits in length, fifty cubits in breadth, and thirty high,* with three stories, a door at the side of it, and a window on the top of the ark. (Gen. vi. 14.) For God said, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life from under heaven, and every thing that is in the earth shall die ; but with thee will I establish my covenant, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy son's wives with thee ; and of all kind of creatures, take with thee into the ark, of the clean birds and clean animals of each seven pair, but of the unclean only take one pair.

W. S. O, the profound wisdom of God, to preserve alive more of the clean than of the unclean ! But did you not think that the ark

* If the Hebrew cubit be reckoned at twenty-one inches, the ark was five hundred and twelve feet long, eighty-seven wide, and fifty-two feet high ; and the internal capacity of it, was 357,600 cubical cubits. But if we reckon only eighteen inches to the cubit, its length was four hundred and fifty feet, soventy-five feet wide, and forty-five in height.—*Trans.*

would be too small for so many animals, because you had also to take food for them ?

N. I was but little concerned about that. I put implicit confidence in God, and went into the ark, well knowing that he would order every thing wisely.

W. S. Father, I do not think that you made the ark yourself.

N. I did the greater part of it with my own family : besides my sons, I also had several hirelings, and I employed several carpenters. In the first place we cut down trees and had them brought all to one place, and had the timbers hewn and some of it sawed into boards, so that I could afterwards do all the other work with my own family.

W. S. What did the people say when they saw you thus engaged ?

N. At first they did not know what I was going to do ; some thought I was going to build a large house ; others, that I was going to build a city for my generation ; others, again, that I was going to build a large barn ; and so on : but I said nothing until I thought I could do without the assistance of the ungodly.

W. S. Why did you say nothing for such a long time ?

N. So that if they would not any longer assist me, that I could do all the work with my own people—as it happened to be the case : for as soon as I had told them what I was

about, one shouldered his axe, another put his saw under his arm, a third gathered all his tools into a basket, and off they went; none would work for me.

W. S. That is strange, that they would no longer help you!

N. My son, it is nothing strange, for they thought it something incredible; and they feared, should any one believe it, that their trade would not be as good as it was, for the carpenter's business at that time was a first-rate business; it was the prevailing trade of that day; partly because the population increased greatly, and partly because they took a great pride in pulling down and building stately palaces. Carpenters were scarce to be had; and if people had believed me, building would have ceased immediately.

W. S. As the ungodly left you, were you able to go on yourself with the building of the ark?

N. We could well do it then, for the heaviest part of the work was done; besides we had considerable time to build the ark; for God would have it so that I should spend many years in building it, so that I would also have some leisure to preach repentance to the world.*

W. S. But when they saw the work progress, did they not begin to fear?

N. Not at all. Some mocked and said,

* Noah was called a preacher of righteousness. 2 Pet. ii. 5.—Trans.

what is the old man going to do? Others said, "He has some more strange prophecies in his head, saying the world will be destroyed; but should the world be destroyed, and this old simpleton be saved alone, and we are to drown, what kind of talk is all that? No! the world is too firm; the sun, the moon, and the stars will continue in their courses, and nothing will change. Besides, marrying and giving in marriage, building and planting will always be the order of the day, as it has ever been; therefore, it is all fabulous—his talk is incredible!"

W. S. Was there none that believed you?

N. Among the aged, there were a few. Methuselah and my father Lamech believed and they corroborated my statements; but they did not regard them, for they believed them to be childish, on account of their great age.

W. S. O, how sensuality blinds the heart!

N. Son, this I have often witnessed, for I preached, prayed, entreated, exhorted them, and pointed them to the ark; telling them, behold the time cometh that God will destroy the world by a flood, therefore am I building the ark. Repent, reform, and you shall be saved; if not, you must perish, and lament your impenitence when too late. But all was in vain—they increased in wickedness daily.

W. S. But how did it go with them in the end?

N. They saw me going on regularly with building the ark ; and the world changed in wickedness, drunkenness, lewdness, incontinence, and all manner of fraud in weight and measure—those who dealt honourably before and acted with discretion, were seen to be in confusion : one attended to his domestic concerns, another was planting trees, a third riding in his pleasure carriage ; and you could scarcely find one that had any desire at all for spiritual things ; and thus they continued rioting and revelling—all the earth was wicked !

W. S. O what a lamentable state of things !

N. I often indulged the hope that some one or other would repent and reform. I several times spoke with them familiarly on the subject, but I was invariably insulted or frowned at, or they turned their backs upon me—even some fell asleep when I continued my discourse too long ; nay, some who were very rude blasphemed, and threatened to strike me, so that I was often obliged to desist preaching.

W. S. Father, this must have been a burden upon your heart, to await their dreadful doom, for no doubt there were some of your friends among them ; and the time was fast approaching !

N. Son, I am not able to tell you the bur-

den of my heart then, to look upon the destruction of the whole human family !

W. S. Did there not some die, in the mean time, on account of their age ?

N. Certainly, some died of sickness and age, according to the cause of nature ; among others, while I was engaged at the ark, my father Lamech died, aged 777 years ; he died five years before the flood. Shortly after his death I finished the ark. Gen. v. 31.

W. S. Did the people at that time not begin to reflect ?

N. Much less than before. In no year was there so much building, so much attention paid to agriculture, so many marriages —mercantile business was never more attended to, than during the year before the flood : so that it appeared foolishness to them to preach or to think that the world would be destroyed by a flood.

W. S. How wonderful, as if God was trying your faith !

N. As I knew that the ways of God were wondrous, I was very little startled.

W. S. Nevertheless, it was something remarkable !

N. Your remarks are correct ; but what I have further to relate is worthy your attention. There was in my neighbourhood a wealthy and respectable man, the ruins of whose house are yet to be seen : he had four sons and three daughters married this year.

At each marriage a sumptuous and splendid feast was prepared—singing and dancing, as usual. The man came to me, and told what a splendid house he was about building for his eldest son, for the second son another, and so on; each was to have a convenient house, and in addition to this, each was to have a portion of land adapted to agriculture, horticulture, &c. &c.; and after his death each was to inherit his portion of the undivided lands. He said, “We are in duty bound to provide for our offspring.” I said to him, “My beloved friend, are you yet so ignorant; do you not know that the world must be destroyed, and perhaps in this very year? What will then all your providing for be—would it not be much better to learn to know God, and not to be so much concerned about the things of this world?” But all that I could say availed nothing. He began to reason with himself, saying, “Why would God do all this?—he is too gracious, too merciful: he made the world and the things therein, that we should enjoy them,” and so on. I said, “Friend, you are ignorant of the mercy of God, for his mercy is to wean our affections from this world, and to prepare us to enjoy another, a better world; and he will not suffer us to remain in the bondage and service of vanity and sin—all has to perish at last.” But all this was useless, he went on in his mad career; sent for the carpenters and stone cutters, laid the foundations for

his houses, made ready all the materials. Some of his buildings were already in progress, some knee high, other the height of a man, when the flood came. Some of the remains are yet to be seen.

W. S. If the old man was so blindfolded, what could we expect of the young ones?

N. This you may readily imagine. But to proceed. In the same year Methuselah died; he was a son of Enoch. Methuselah was 969 years old when he died. Gen. v. 27.

W. S. He attained a good age, and although he was an old man, God took him away shortly before the flood. I am anxious to know more of this history.

N. Where I was residing there was a great festival; they collected from every part of the world; the market places were crowded with all manner of traffic, the taverns were crowded, wine was drunk like water, they were all exulting and triumphing; quarrelling and fighting, carousing, playing, and revelling till midnight; instead of thinking on God, they mocked, inveighed, and threatened, saying, "Where is the ark-builder? It appears that the world was to have been destroyed, but we see it is all false—the ark-builder is a liar—every thing will continue as it has ever been." And the like derision did they utter. I heard a great tumult at my door and a cry: "Come, carpenter, we will put an end to your world, you impostor, you

are only trying to disturb us, to mar our enjoyments; you are a notorious liar." In the mean time I was prostrated before God, and prayed for them with tears, that he would not lay this sin to their charge—my whole family was praying for them during the whole night. The next day, which was the tenth of the second month, and in the six hundredth year of my age, the Lord said to me: "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth—come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation; take with thee all such animals as I commanded thee, for yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain, and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." I did according unto all that the Lord commanded me.

W. S. What did then follow?

N. I immediately sent my sons to prepare the ark: they pitched it wherever the sun had caused a rent; after that they prepared the rooms, and the places for the animals, so that every kind might be put in its appropriate place, the larger ones together, and the lesser ones together, and such as were of the same species. To the birds was assigned the upper story, and the creeping things were also to occupy the upper story; and we occupied

one of the middle chambers. Then they finished all the necessaries for us and the animals.

W. S. Father, you had much to arrange and set in order, before you had brought each in its proper place, had you not?

N. You are right, my son; besides that I was very much troubled on account of the impending destruction of the children of men, and I warned them again, especially my friends and acquaintances; but they did not regard my admonitions.

W. S. O their obduracy! But, tell me, how could you get the animals to come to you?

N. O son, with them we had no trouble; the divine Power sent them, and in such perfect order, that we were astonished at them; for scarcely were the preliminaries attended to, than came the lion and lioness as lambs; we showed them their place, and they went in and laid down quietly. In like manner did the elephant come with his mate, and so did the rhinoceros, the camel, the panther, the leopard, the wolf, the bear, the dromedary the lynx, the horse, the ass, the ground-hog, the swine, the camel-leopard, the phoenix, the hyena, the gryphen, &c. &c. Likewise did the lesser animals enter; such as the fox, the dog, the cat, the monkey, the rabbit, the squirrel, the weasel, rats, mice, &c. &c. And so did the grasshopper,

flies, silkworms, and all manner of creeping things, of each one pair ; but of the clean there were seven pair, such as the cow, the sheep, geese, deer, &c. &c.; all went to their places assigned them, in the most perfect order.

W. S. Father, I hear wonders ; I am astonished how these animals would all lie down together, as some of them are very fierce and bloodthirsty !

N. God made them all tame. There was not the least difficulty on that account ; even the most venomous animals were harmless ; for we had dragons, different species of serpents, and other venomous animals ; the chameleon, the crocodile, the hippopotamus, the otter, the beaver, and the like animals ; the spider was busily engaged to weave itself a web in the ark to catch the small insects and flies, but she, as well as the serpent, did not give any sign of her malicious nature ; the wolf did not grin his teeth at the sheep ; the rhinoceros and the ichneumon did not attempt to harm the crocodile ; but they were all as prisoners, endeavouring to save each others' lives.

W. S. Wonderful interference of God ! How glorious a sight to see the animals enter into the ark so orderly, and especially the birds, of which you have told me nothing as yet.

N. This is certainly so, my son, for these came flying in on the last day ; except those whose bodies are too heavy for the powers of

their wings, such as the ostrich, condor, the cock and hen, the duck, partridge, and all such, came in at the door; the others generally came into the ark at the window; yet in such a perfect order, that they could be easily distinguished.

W. S. O what a beautiful sight, but withal a sorrowful scene, as it was to escape such a dreadful calamity !

N. There came the noble and only phœnix, the beautiful bird of paradise, the halcyon and his mate, the splendid peacock and peahen, the snow-white swan, the soaring eagle, the green parrot, the crooked bill-ed owl, the keen hawk, the lively sparrow-hawk, the camel-bird, the purple bird, the long-necked crane, the lovely and sprightly canary bird, the goldfinch, yellow and red-breasted robin, the stork, the turtle dove, and all manner of birds, such as the bloodthirsty harpie, the wouwe, the folk, the cuckoo, owls, and ravens; at last came the sea-gull with doleful cry, plainly foretelling, by its looks, the dreadful tempest which was hastening with acceleration to the general destruction of every thing upon earth that had in it the breath of life.

W. S. Father, you mentioned a multitude of animals as well as of birds: their ingress into the ark must have been but slow, or much order must have been preserved in their entrance into the ark.

N. This all happened on the last day; but we made due preparations before, as I told you, by the Divine command; and on the seventh day, namely, on the seventeenth day of the second month, I and my wife, my three sons and their wives, according to the command of God, went into the ark. At the same hour, when all things were ready, the animals followed us, and then came in the birds, who well knew how to enter according to order.

W. S. Had they all room?

N. They had. As I told you, the ark was three hundred cubits long, fifty broad, and thirty high; and when the larger animals were in the place assigned them, the lesser took up but little space; and the birds, although there were seven pair of each kind, did not take up more than half of the upper story; the small birds could have been easily put in a place of four cubits square. Many took up their place under the roof: such as owls and bats sat together. And if a hundred of individuals had repented, or even many more, we would have had room plenty for them. But to wish is vain; there was no space given any more for repentance.

W. S. Please to tell me how it did further go?

N. O, son, although it is rather a doleful undertaking, I will relate it to you for your further instruction.

W. S. I will listen attentively.

N. The same day when we went into the ark, the weather was remarkably fine; the rye was standing ripe in the fields; every thing in full verdure and blossoming; the carpenters and masons actively engaged, and the smith's hammer was heard resound; several houses were building; at some scaffolds were fixing up; the farmers engaged in the fields at their hay; weddings were being held; one said to another, what fine weather we have, and what a plenteous harvest; every thing appears as though the destruction of the world by the flood was not near at hand. And while all were merry and joyful, busily engaged in planting, farming, building, marrying and getting married, dancing and singing, without the least thought that God would deluge the world; and that we had all gone into the ark after being mocked by all who saw us build it; and when the Lord had closed the door thereof, then the heavens were spread over with thick, black, lowering clouds, and a tremendous thunder-storm, rain and hail, began—such a tempest as was never seen or heard of. Each ran to his house for shelter, thinking that all would soon be over. The sable night succeeded; nothing but tremendous thunder and the rattling hail and rain was heard. The following day some of the meadows were covered over with water, so that some concluded to drive home their cattle;

but all was in vain, for they did not only see the torrents of rain continue, but the fountains of the deep were opened (Gen. vii. 11), and powerful streams gushed out; so that as a roaring sea, the water came running down from the mountains, and filled every valley, so that the creatures began to swim and make for elevated places. The rye was swimming upon the surface of the water; the new buildings began to fall; their festivities were dispersed; all their merriments were ended; every one began to think of his wife and children—but it was with much difficulty that they could get to their houses. They saw the water running into their houses; they looked with the greatest anxiety to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south, to see whether there was not some appearance of a change, but there was no hope; for the rain increased every hour—it continued day and night. On the third day they were attempting to escape to the mountains, and thus they might have effected their escape, had the rain continued but for a few days; but it was otherwise. Some got upon their house-tops; others did climb upon trees; others did flee to the mountains, where they all were for a short time safe.

W. S. Father, please to tell me, did they not then see that this tempest was caused by their sins?

N. O son, had you heard the pitiful and

lamentable cries as the waters increased, and the roofs were swept from the houses, and the tops of the trees being covered over; mothers catching their children round their necks, men their women, friends and neighbours folding each other in their arms, seeing the dead before them; some were wringing their hands, crying and sighing, beholding the ark at a distance, which was now floating on the surface of the water, but it was too late; the day of grace was gone!

W. S. O what a sorrowful sight! perhaps they would have repented had God given them another day of grace!

N. Forced repentance is not so abiding as voluntary repentance: they did not regard God in their day of grace, therefore he did not regard them in the day of trouble.

W. S. True, he that despises God, knows not whom he despises.

N. That is true; but to proceed. In a few days some of the mountain tops were not to be seen any more—here and there were to be seen roofs of houses, household furniture, trees upon which were dead carcasses; rocking cradles with children, mothers with children at their breasts, some folded in each others' arms, some on the dead carcasses of animals; birds which could fly no longer, and many other animals. There were a few of some of the highest mountains that were not wholly inundated; these were crowded with men and

animals, all making most a doleful cry ; one saw his father swimming, another his mother, brother and sister, and a third his children, and a fourth knew not where his friends had stayed ; and what was the most lamentable, none had aught to look for but death, for it continued to rain day and night ; they still tried to get up higher, but the water was on their heels : they saw no way open to escape, they would have gladly come into the ark, but they could not reach it.

W. S. O how dear was their mocking and laughing to them. How painful the reflection that they did not regard the counsel of God !!

N. They now well saw that their false prophets had deceived them in explaining every thing as natural occurrences, as if God had not intended to warn them through those portentous signs. What did all their temporal pleasures avail them ?—their houses, their lands, and their cattle were all destroyed by the flood : the mighty of the earth were no more than the poor and lowly, the tyrants were no more than those whom they sorely oppressed. In short, every one was now convinced of his vain pursuits.

W. S. Father, you speak the truth ; but be pleased to let me hear more of this history.

N. After a few days more, all the mountains were overflowed, so that every thing on them had fled—every thing was destroyed, men and beast, birds and insects, nothing

remained alive except what was in the ark, for it rained forty days and forty nights, so that the water was fifteen cubits* high above the tops of the highest mountain, Gen. vii. 20, before it ceased raining, so that all things perished.

W. S. O, the dreadful destruction occasioned by sin.

N. O son, from this you may learn both the mercy and justice of God; merciful to those who repent, just in punishing the impenitent sinner.

W. S. This is an everlasting example: but if you please proceed with your narration.

N. When the forty days' rain were over, the sky became clear, the weather calm, pleasant, and agreeable; the sun began to shine, and the stars also appeared; but upon the face of the earth nothing but water was to be seen, and the ark floating upon it; and every thing that had life was destroyed. The ark floated upon the face of the water 156 days before it struck any obstacle. During that period I instructed my family in divine things, and said many prayers; and they attended to the creatures, feeding them with the necessary food. There was a great change of temperature felt in the ark, for the sun had entered Cancer, and the heat thereof was considerably tempered by the frigid-

* Twenty-two feet and a half.—*Trans.*

ity of the water, and both the water and the wind were attempered by the heat of the sun. After the sun had gone down one hundred and fifty times below the cerulean horizon, and again arose in the purple east without his rays being obstructed from the face of the waters by trees or houses, and as he advanced in his course and entered Libra, when day and night are equal, it was then that the ark struck, and stood still, which did not occasion us little joy, for we hence concluded that the waters were abating. From that time on, the mountain upon which the ark rested became more and more visible, and the waters abated daily; for which we praised God, who was mindful of us, for we were very anxious to get on dry land. When the first day of the tenth month was at hand, and the sun entered Aquarius, we saw the mountain tops appear, and we concluded that the ark had rested on the highest mountain in Armenia,* whereof the remains of that mountain bear testimony to this day.

W. S. Did not the beasts and birds give some evidence of joy?

N. As long as the sun retrograded towards the south they appeared to be dejected; but

* On the mountains of Ararat, about the middle of Armenia, near the river of Araxes or Aras; by which mountains we are to understand the highest mountains of Taurus, which overlook the plains of Ararat in Armenia. Ararat is now called Alasis by the natives.—*Trans.*

as soon as the sun approached the zenith and entered Aquarius, some of the animals were heard. Especially the fowls of the air—the lark began carolling most sweetly. The raven seemed to have smelled the dead carcasses; he began to croak and make for the window. When I saw all these signs I began to suspect that the waters had measurably abated. I opened the window on the tenth day of the month, Shebath,* as the sun was entering the Pisces, and let out the raven, and he flew to and fro, from one hill to another, which was a sure sign that the waters were not all dried up, although the raven did not return into the ark.

W. S. Father, could you not look out at the window, and see whether the waters were not wholly abated?

N. Because the mountain was so very high upon which the ark had rested. The land below was intercepted from my sight by the atmosphere, that I could not be fully persuaded whether it was water or air. In order to ascertain it, I did send out a dove, which returned, and I took her into the ark again. Gen. viii. 6-9.

W. S. How did it happen that the dove returned, and not the raven?

N. In the first place the raven found many dead carcasses upon which he could rest, and had no desire to return. Secondly, because

* July 10th.

the dove found nothing to eat ; and not being so speedy in flight as to reach the mountain tops, she returned again into the ark. However, I waited seven days longer, and then let out the dove, who on her return brought welcome intelligence, for she brought an olive branch in her mouth. This was a sure evidence that the waters had abated so much that the trees were every where visible. Gen. viii. 10, 11. This took place on the twenty-fifth day of Shebath.* Seven days afterwards I let out another dove, but this returned not again. Gen. viii. 12.

W. S. Were you then assured that all the waters were dried up ?

N. It was certainly a good evidence. But I did not dare at the attempt to open the ark, or to get out of it, without the command of Him who bid me enter it : although I knew that the waters were abated, yet did I not trust in my own wisdom, but I waited for the express command from my Creator.

W. S. How long did you remain in the ark after the last dove was sent out ?

N. Nearly two months. For it pleased God to give us the land, not only perfectly dry, but also fruitful and in full verdure ; and purged from all filthiness, and the noxious stench of carcasses of men and beasts, strewed upon the whole face of the earth. Notwithstanding, to the delight of the animals and

* 25th of July, A. M. 1656.

myself, I uncovered the ark ; and thus giving free vent to the pure and vivifying air, although none desired to go out of the ark till God gave the command, on the 27th of the second month,* that I, my wife, my sons, their wives, with the animals and all creeping things, should go out of the ark. Gen. viii. 14, 17.

W. S. Was there not great joy among the animals when their emancipation was announced ?

N. Their joy is not to be described. And how orderly they were in egressing when we had prepared the way before them.

W. S. Be pleased to tell me concerning your coming out of the ark.

N. This I will very briefly tell you. After we came out of the ark, on Mount Ararat's† lofty summit, all the animals followed us by pairs as they entered into the ark, evincing a great degree of sprightliness—leaping and skipping, feeding upon the grass of the earth, which they had not seen during a confinement of one year and ten days ; and after I had selected a few to sacrifice, as well from among the clean birds, as from among the

* The 27th of October, A. M. 1657.

† Ararat is encompassed with several little hills; though it is in the midst of one of the greatest plains on the earth, and entirely separated from the other mountains in Armenia. It rises in the form of a sugar loaf, and is one of the highest mountains in the world. No living animals are to be seen, but at the bottom and towards the middle of the mountain.—*Trans.*

other animals, they all dispersed, each to his respective place. The herbaceous went into places where was grass; the carnivorous prowled about and lived on dead carcasses; the aquatics retired to fens, marshes, and waters; the fowls of the air made for the forests, carolling and praising their Creator—especially the sweet-singing nightingale. Every thing that had a tuneful voice was heard proclaim the great Creator's praise; neither the cuckoo nor the owl could refrain bringing their tribute of praise. Some retired into particular parts of the world. The bird of paradise and the poll-parrot migrated to a certain island in the Indies; the phoenix went into Arabia; the calcoon went to the west; the canary bird to the east; the ibis into Egypt; the crow and kingfisher went to the northern regions; others were dispersed throughout the whole world; others, such as the crane, the stork, and swallow of the migrative kind, observed seasons of the year, and followed the summer: each increased, and the world was replenished.

W. S. Thus each animal went into that part of the world best adapted to its nature.

N. You are right. For that reason God created so many different kinds of animals and birds, so that all parts of the world—nay, the air itself, should abound with living creatures. For he is a God of life, and desires

that every creature should live in its own element or sphere.

W. S. Father, two questions present themselves which you can answer at once.

N. What questions are they ?

W. S. The first is, in what condition did you find the world when you came out of the ark ? The other, what was your occupation ?

N. To answer your last question, I have to tell you as soon as I came out of the ark, and before we descended from the mountain, I built an altar unto the Lord, and offered a burnt-offering for the preservation of our lives. (Gen. viii. 20.) For as every creature is influenced by its *sui generis* (its like), so we, the head of creation, are influenced by our kindred in heaven. And being thus drawn by love, I offered the Lord a sweet-smelling sacrifice—incense of clean animals ; and prayed God most devoutly, that he would be pleased to become reconciled, and destroy the human family no more. And the Lord accepted of the sweet smell of the burnt sacrifice ; and the Lord said in his own heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake ; for the imaginations of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease. Gen. viii. 21, 22.

W. S. What do I hear! Father, can God smell?

N. Because God, who by nature is an amiable being, loves every thing that is amiable. He is not so much pleased with the bare offering, as with the uprightness of heart. God's compassion cannot be more excited, than to offer him the sincere and honest desires of the heart, which are more pleasing to him than sweet spices. All that he desires of us is, to love him only. This was manifested in the case of Abel; for it was only the sincerity of his heart that made his sacrifice acceptable to God. On the other hand, it was Cain's wicked heart that made God reject his offering.

W. S. You have given me considerable light on this subject.

N. After that God blessed us, that we might replenish the earth, and have dominion over the creatures thereof; not only to govern and subdue them, but to eat their flesh. Before the deluge we were not permitted to eat flesh.*

W. S. Why did God permit you now to eat flesh?

N. Because the flesh of animals is much coarser and not of such an excellent substance as the flesh of man; besides the animals are often emboldened, without violating their

* It is not certain whether flesh was eaten by the religious families before the flood. We have nothing on record from which it appears that God had given Adam express leave to eat flesh.—Trans.

nature, to devour human flesh and shed human blood : therefore God gave man permission to slay every clean animal and eat its flesh, that he might be lord of all flesh ; for God created man after his image ; therefore he will not suffer the shedding of man's blood to be unavenged—yea, man himself, if he shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed again. But since this law cannot take effect on the wild animals, therefore is the blood of man avenged in the use of animal flesh ; yet with this proviso, that the flesh, with the blood therein, shall not be eaten, or while there is life in the flesh (Gen. ix. 4). But flesh, with the life thereof, shall ye not eat.

W. S. Why not, father ?

N. God, who is the author and preserver of life, does not want man to eat the flesh of animals in a murderous or bloodthirsty manner ; but first to offer God thanksgiving, and then to eat the flesh when fully free from all blood.

W. S. It is with much pleasure that I listen to your narration, and am anxious to hear more.

N. Afterwards God made a covenant with me and the whole human family, that henceforth there should never be a flood any more ; and he appointed the rainbow of various hues to be a token of it.

W. S. I thought the rainbow was made by the sunbeams shining upon the falling

rain, and not by a special work of God, as a token of nature.*

N. It is true, that it is made by the sunbeams shining upon the falling rain; but the sun of himself could not give it those perfect hues as we see in it. The blue signifies that the world was destroyed by water; the green signifies that the earth shall be ever fruitful; the red signifies that the world is to be destroyed by fire. If it were not that the finger of God had an agency in it, how could the different colours be separated from each other, and not be in chaotic confusion, as we see that it is the case in a drop of rain when the sun is shining upon it; for we perceive several colours mixed, whereas in the rainbow, there is a distinct line of demarcation of the different colours observable in the rainbow; one part altogether green, another blue, and another red?

W. S. But we see sometimes that the sun and the moon have a halo of diverse colours around them.

N. I am ready to admit, that it is sometimes so in nature, for I saw such halos myself before the flood; but never the rainbow, until after the forty days and forty nights rain, from which it is evident that as God did, contrary to nature, cause it to rain forty

* It is not probable that there was a rainbow before the flood, for the earth was watered daily by a thick mist, Gen. ii. 5, 6, and then there could be naturally no rainbow; for it is made by the sunbeams shining upon falling rain.—*Trans.*

days, so he does make the variegated rainbow contrary to the laws of nature; and thus the rainbow appears during the rain as a token that He will no more destroy the world by a flood, though the waters fall copiously.

W. S. Thus I hear that God operates by means of natural things, and though they appear to be common things, they are notwithstanding more than ordinary.

N. Yes.

W. S. Now I come to the other question. In what condition did you find the earth when you came out of the ark? Be pleased to tell me.

N. O son, it is unpleasant for me to tell you! As we came down from the mountain, we found many dead carcasses, both of men and beasts, that had gone up on the mountains to escape. The trees also were hanging full of dead bodies. The fields were strewed over with shells, because the sea had been over the whole earth; in some low marshy places were trees lying covered over with mud, so that it will appear strange to many of the coming generations how these trees had been covered over so deep with earth; and how it happened that some mountain tops are covered over with shells. And we also found the bodies of large fish that had come out of the ocean, not knowing that beneath them were green pastures. The rivers also changed their courses; for the river

which used to flow out of the paradise was not to be found any more; the river Nile took its rise in the east, and Euphrates in Armenia, Hiddihel in Mesopotamia, the Gihon or Ganges in Assyria extended further into India. The great cities and towns were laid waste; scarcely could the houses be recognised as such; so that the world was quite in a different condition than it formerly was.

W. S. Father, you have satisfied me in this matter; but, if I give no offence in asking you to proceed, will you please to tell me how things went on during the remaining part of your lifetime of 348 years. For I perceive that the world is so thickly populated, and every thing in such a fine condition, that it seems to be almost incredible that every thing was destroyed, and cities laid waste.

N. O son, it would require much time to tell you all what happened during that period; but I will tell you all that relates to the rebuilding and repopulating of the world. Immediately after the flood, I began to till the ground, and I planted a vineyard. Gen. ix. 20. My son Shem built cottages; and two years after the flood he had a son born, whom he called Arphaxad. Gen. x. 22. He is now 346 years old, and had many children, out of whose lineage Abraham is, whom you saw speak with Shem. Besides Arphaxad, Shem had four other sons, called Elam,

Asshur, Lud, and Amram, who became a mighty people. Likewise, Japhet had seven sons, namely, Gomer, Magog, Madia, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Teras; each of these had four children. My third son Ham also had four sons, Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. The latter was ungodly and a mocker; he saw me naked, and made sport with me; but my two sons, Shem and Japhet covered me with a garment and concealed my nakedness, therefore, did I bless them; but cursed the race of Canaan. Gen. ix. 22-25. Notwithstanding the children of Ham became a mighty people, and exercised dominion.

W. S. I perceive that ungodliness was not wholly destroyed by the flood.

N. By no means, my son, but it increased daily.

W. S. Father, what do you say?

N. Son, I will tell you. When Peleg Shem's third son was born, 104 years after the flood, then was the land divided; and for the following reasons. Shortly after the flood, my children migrated to the land of Shinar; and some of them being very ambitious to make themselves renowned, and others proud and haughty, as if to bid defiance to the Almighty, and escape another flood, they concluded to build a city, and in it an immensely high tower, whose top should reach the heavens. Gen. xi. 2, 3.

W. S. Father, it appears to me that your children ought to have been wiser, than to rise up against their Maker, whose punitive justice they had lately seen exhibited ; nor were they ignorant of astronomy, and they might have known that it was impossible for them to build a tower whose top was to reach to the heavens.

N. Touching my sons, Shem and Japhet, they well knew it was a vain undertaking ; nor did they consent to it. But one of Ham's descent, called Nimrod, who was a son of Chuz, he became a mighty man in the world ; he was the first great hunter ; he was called a mighty hunter before the LORD, because he had many that adhered to him ; and by the aid of Assur, Shem's son, he made himself lord over all ; and some through persuasion, others by compulsion, were made to yield to his wild notions, and they all engaged in building the aforesaid city and tower.

W. S. O what presumptuous arrogance !

N. They immediately commenced building brick-kilns—mortar was prepared ; many trees were felled ; carpenters, masons, brick-layers, and many other labourers were called to work—daily were they employed, and busily engaged ; and in a very short time they had built the tower an immense height. But this daring presumption was not well pleasing in the sight of God, and as

he had determined to destroy the world no more by a flood, he availed himself of another expedient to frustrate their undertaking.

W. S. Father, what expedient was that?

N. At that time they all spoke one language; but God confounded them so that they could not understand one another (Gen. xi. 6-8); for when one called for stone, the other brought wood; when another called stone, he was handed lime; when one said hoist, the other let down. In short, they became quite enraged at each other; each thought that the others mocked him. And when they came together to instruct each other, one spoke Hebrew, another Greek, Arabic, Indian, Tartar, Moorish, &c. &c. As there was none that could remedy this evil, they then separated, and the tower was left unfinished, not only on this account, but they must needs disperse; for Japhet's children emigrated to the west; Gomer* into Galatia; Thuiscon into Germany (Teutschland); Tubal into Iberia; Meshech into Capadocia; Tharsis built a city called Tharsis; Magog took possession of Scotland; his children and grand children took possession of the islands of the west; but Ham's children principally emigrated to the south; Chuz went into Ethiopia; Mizraim into Egypt. Canaan went into a country which he called

* Gomer, it is supposed by some, was the father of the Germans; Javan of the Greeks; Meschech of the Muscovites, and other families that dwelt in Europe.—*Trans.*

after his own name, Canaan. His sons were Sidon, Heth, Girgosi, Jebusi, Amor, who called all their posterity after their own names; but the children of Shem remained with their father in the east. Assur remained with Nimrod,* who improved the city, and on account of the confusion of the language, called it BABEL, where they commenced the first Assyrian monarchy. The others, namely, Seba, Ophir, and Havilah, emigrated to the Indies, where Peleg and his father Eber are now; and also his father Sola the son of Arphaxad, and Shem,† his grandfather.

W. S. Father, you have told me wonderful things, and a striking example both of man's first disobedience, and of the wisdom of God in frustrating the designs of the crafty, and punishing them in such a way that all turns out to the advantage of the world; for through the confusion of language, and the consequent dispersion, the whole world is populated, which was laid waste by the flood.

N. This is a good remark.

W. S. Be pleased to tell me what further befell the Assyrian monarchy, for, as I understand, they have lately received another king, called Ninyas.

* About the time of Nimrod, Egypt seems to have been divided into four dynasties, Thebes, Thin, Memphis, and Tanis.

† The offspring or posterity of Shem are the Persians, who came from Elam their father; the Syrians from Amram; the Hebrews from Eber, as is supposed; and particularly the Jews, with other inhabitants of Asia. Gen. x. 21.—*Trans.*

N. It is true, but I am afraid that he introduced too much luxury and extravagance and vicious practices.

W. S. Father, how so ?

N. O, how the world is so easily deceived !

W. S. If you please, relate this more circumstantially, so that I may fully understand it.

N. Son, this I will cheerfully do ; but in the first place, I will give a historical narration how Ninyas became king.

W. S. I will listen attentively.

N. After Nimrod, the mighty hunter, had subdued some of the neighbouring people by force of arms, and reigned fifty-four years, he was succeeded by Jupiter Belus, who introduced a good policy ; he was acquainted with astronomy, for he had the advantage of others having access to the inscriptions on the pillars ; he also improved Babylon. In short, he died respected and regretted. His subjects honoured him highly.* During his reign, Serug the son of Reu was born. Nahor, Serug's son was born when he was but 30 years old, and

* His son Ninus caused his father's image to be worshipped as a God. This is remarked to have been the origin of idols. This Jupiter Belus was supposed to be a son of Osiris of the Egyptians. The Temple of Belus was the most ancient and most magnificent in the world. It was originally the tower of Babel, which was converted into a temple. It had lofty towers, and was enriched by all the succeeding monarchs, till the age of Xerxes, who, after his unfortunate expedition against Greece, plundered and demolished it.—*Trans.*

about two hundred after the flood. Jupiter Belus was succeeded by Ninus, who built a city called Nineveh ; he also built other cities, Rehaboth, Ir, and Calah, and also the great city Rossen, between Nineveh and Calah. In the forty-first year of his reign Abraham was born of Terah, the son of Nahor. But when Ninus had reigned fifty-two years he was put to death by Semiramis, his wife.* She was a masculine, haughty, and aspiring woman ; she had many great battles in war, and killed Zoroaster.† And after having taken possession again of the city, which had revolted, she built a great wall around it, sufficiently broad at the top so that six chariots could pass along abreast ; and when Babylon had become the most superb and magnificent city in the world, and after she reigned forty-one years she died ;‡ then this Ninyas succeeded her. He has now reigned five years.

W. S. Father, please to tell me something of the extravagance, luxury, and corrupted manners which this monarch introduced.

* Ninus was so fond of Semiramis, that at her request he resigned the crown to her, and commanded her to be proclaimed queen and sole empress of Assyria. However, the better to establish *herself* on the throne, she put Ninus to death.—*Trans.*

† Zoroaster was an eminent Bactrian philosopher. According to Justin, he first invented magic, or the doctrines of the Magi, and rendered himself known by his deep and acute researches in philosophy, the origin of the world, and the study of astronomy.—*Trans.*

‡ Some historians say that she voluntarily resigned the sceptre, after she had swayed it forty-two years. Justin says she was killed by her son Ninyas.

N. This I will do. Besides his luxury, he introduced the worshipping of idols. Nor did Ninus alone make an image of his father Belus; but others made images of certain females. Pallas and Vesta were honoured and worshipped as goddesses. This Ninyas erected temples for them, as though they were gods and goddesses, to the dishonour of the Almighty, of whom cometh every good and perfect gift; and this he does in such a way as to impress the idea, that all was done to the honour of God, so that even Tarah, Abraham's father, was deceived, and is worshipping strange gods; nay, his whole family is tainted with idolatry; and I was much concerned for Abraham. I warned him, and admonished him, never to forsake the eternal and only one God. It appeared to me it would be much better for him to leave the country, than that he should be decoyed by his friends; for the friendship of this world is so deceiving, that it is much better for man to be a pilgrim upon earth, than to remain with friends and be contaminated with idolatry; and because his father Tarah was very wealthy, he was in greater danger to remain at home than if he would leave his friends, although Abraham is a man of good repute, and is well instructed; but friends have a powerful influence. Inviting each other to dine, according to the custom of the country, the offerings of idols were brought on the

table ; music of every kind accompanying their feasts ; the tables were decorated with splendid plates, cups and saucers ; the conversation was wholly of wealth and riches, which they had obtained—of their fine gardens and lands, &c. &c. : this engrossed their whole attention. I know so many that have been decoyed, that I am very solicitous about the pious Abraham.

W. S. Father, your remarks are very good ; but where was he to go ? Is not all the world corrupted ? Did I not understand you that wickedness increased much since the flood ?

N. Yes, you have rightly understood me ; but there are many honest and sincere persons, God-fearing men. There is a country south of us called Canaan ; in that country there is now living a pious and devout priest called Melchisedeck, who made an offering of bread and wine to the Most High. He lives in a city built by himself called Salem, where he reigns as a peaceable king. O that Abraham might enjoy his company : although he would be a stranger for a time, he would still have this consolation, that ultimately all would work together for his good.

W. S. What do I hear ? Do the pious build cities on earth ? I thought that they all lived in cottages, and were as pilgrims here.

N. Although they built houses and cities, they served them only temporal purposes—

no more than the pilgrim's cottage ; because their affections are not placed upon these things ; but they have them placed upon heavenly things. They have also different views in building them, the children of the world having their hearts fixed upon invisible things. For instance, there is the city of Salem. O, son, were I to tell you all concerning the mysterious history which shall be revealed in future, it would consume too much time ; for the spirit of the prophets shews wonderful things of this city. I am now old and superannuated, and will not live to see it ; but those who shall live centuries hence, will be able to tell wondrous things that befell this city. The city is, as it were, in the very centre of the earth. It would be nothing strange, were it to become one of the most noted cities in the world : but I will say no more about it, and let time decide.

W. S. This is very good. But it appears to me that so long as Abraham enjoys your company, that it is not advisable for him to leave you, and go into another country.

N. That is the very argument he avails himself of ; and he says he will not leave me unless by a special call from God. In that case he would not listen to any one ; neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, nor friend, should dissuade him then ; and I confidently believe him.

W. S. O, how the pious do always love

each other ! and it is perfectly right ; provided their love emanates from God, and is promotive of his honour, and of the eternal welfare of our fellow-men. I am exceedingly glad to find so many, both young and old, who love you cordially, and honour you as an aged father ; and you naturally are the father of all, and much older than any of them. And as they dispersed in families, and you know the age of them all, I am anxious to know their respective ages, if you please to tell me.

N. I am ready to tell you, my son ; and it will not at all displease me. My son Shem is nearly 450 years old ; Arphaxad, 347 ; Sala, 314 ; Eber, 282 ; Peleg died ten years ago, aged 239 ; Reu is now 218 ; Serug, 186 ; his son Nahor died nine years ago, aged 148 ; Terah is now 127 years old, and his pious son, Abraham, is now 56 years of age.

W. S. Father, there is one thing that I am much surprised at.

N. What is that, my son ?

W. S. Although all these men have not attained your age, yet in their external appearance seem to be older than you ; yea, Terah, Abraham's father's head is nearly silvered over with grey hairs ; and, as you tell me, his father when he died, was but one hundred and forty-eight years old, which appears very strange to me.

N. Son, bear in mind that it is not the will

of God that men should become as old as they did before the flood ; therefore they diminish in age as well as in person ; for you do not see such giants as I have seen before the flood : why, sir, the present race is but dwarfs when compared with those before the flood, although there be some few large men, but these bear no comparison with those.

W. S. Why this great change, father ?

N. For several reasons. In the first place, creation was perfect in all parts ; but now considerably impaired, so that she does not produce such perfect and healthy fruit as before ; the virtue of the herbs and other vegetation is much weakened, so that diseases cannot be so readily prevented. Secondly, it is not necessary for man to live so long to propagate his species as was required before the flood. Thirdly, men do not reform though they should become old, nor through a diminution of bodily strength, as we have an abundance of testimony on this subject, afforded by those of the first world. And, finally, because God created man to dwell with him, and not only to live upon earth ; therefore, it is not very material whether man lives long upon earth or not, so that he lives a godly life.

W. S. O, my dear old father, I am much obliged to you for all your kind instructions, and for your long narrations. I have listened to you with pleasure and astonishment.

I will no longer weary you ; but I pray God, whom you served so sincerely, that he may grant you eternal life when you make your exit hence ; for, as appears to me, your time of sojourneying is but short.

N. O, my son, it is my heart's desire to be eternally happy ; and I do not calculate to live much longer in this vale of tears. And I also wish you the grace of God and his blessing. Continue steadfast in the doctrine which you have received from me ; it was for that purpose that I spoke to you. Adieu, my son ; may the LORD protect you in your pilgrimage, so that you may finish your course as a wise man, and obtain the reward of all the righteous—namely, eternal life. Amen.

When the aged father, Noah, had finished his narration, he rose up and went to the resting place of the holy ones. The WANDERING SOUL pursued his journey, meditating upon what he had heard ; having heard much not recorded in the sacred scriptures, nor had he read them in any book. He recorded them in the book of contemplation, in the book of examination, in the book of reflection ; and having heard nothing but what was in conformity with true history, he received all with a view to improve himself, and was ready to receive further instruction.

DIALOGUE III.

THE WANDERING SOUL WITH SIMON CLEOPHAS.

[THE FIRST PART COMPRISES A PERIOD OF 1356 YEARS—FROM ABRAHAM TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.]

Wandering Soul. Since I have learned the history of the first world through Adam and Noah, by diligent enquiry ; and according to the narration of the latter, more than two thousand years have transpired, in which time, no doubt, many remarkable things occurred ; hence it is that I am inspired with new ardour to find some one who can tell me of those most remarkable things which are profitable to be known ; and am the more desirous, as I find myself in an ancient city, which seems to bear more the marks of the ravages of war, than to be forsaken by adventurers. I see by these ancient vestiges and dilapidated walls, they all appear to wear the marks of conflagration. The precious hewn stones lying here, seem to be all smoked, and much injured by fire. Oh, what a glorious city this must have been ! The mountains, with the remains of old buildings and broken down palaces, as well as the remains of these great walls, all show the former greatness of this place. The new edifices,

appear to me, cannot be compared with the former grandeur of this now desolate place ! Who will give me an account of this city—of its former glory, and of the causes of its desolation ? If I only knew of some old citizen who saw the city in its former and present condition ; one who could inform me from actual observation. There comes a reverend looking man ; he appears to be an intelligent and virtuous man. I expect to receive some information from him. Good day, aged father ! do not take it amiss that I accost you first.

Simon Cleophas. God greet you, my son ! whence are you, and who are you ?

W. S. I am a wanderer, and exceedingly anxious to learn the history of ancient things, as I am always travelling. I have conversed with Adam and Noah, who told me the history of their times ; and since I have not spoken with any one on the subject ; and inasmuch as I am in this decayed and desolated city, and am desirous to know what befell this place, and what important things have occurred here. I apply to you with the expectation that you will tell me all you know concerning it.

S. C. Son, you request much of me.

W. S. How so, father ?

S. C. It would require new powers to tell you all ; and I am an aged and superannuated person, nearly 120 years old ; and I have

to watch the flock intrusted to my care, so that I have very little leisure ; and this narration, to give you it in detail, would require several months' time.

W. S. You make me more desirous to know the history of this place than I was before. But what did you say you are a shepherd ?

S. C. Yes, of men.

W. S. Oh, how happy must be the flock ! But if it be so that you have charge of a fold, recollect I am also one of the flock, and am anxious to be fed of you on the pastures of sound doctrine.

S. C. Since you are sincere, and desiring not only to know, but to do, I will not consider it at all an arduous task, but will serve you cheerfully ; therefore, let us ascend Mount Zion, which is directly in our view.

W. S. To the place where the remains of an old wall are ?

S. C. Yes.

W. S. How difficult it is to get over these heaps of stone. What grand buildings were those lying in ruins. Oh, is it not lamentable that this great city is thus desolate !

S. C. Son, do you already begin to sigh ? Let me sigh, who saw this desolation take place.

W. S. Father, what troubles you ? Why do you weep ?

S. C. Oh, the cause of all this !

W. S. What do you mean by this ?

S. C. I say the justly merited cause. Oh, the innocent blood which was shed in this city ! and especially—

W. S. Father, you are too pensive to tell me any thing. How will we finish ?

S. C. The righteous, the holy one, and the merciful one !

W. S. Oh, how grieved you appear !

S. C. Jesus.

W. S. Who is he ?

S. C. Now I only learn how ignorant you are of those things which happened here ; and that you have spoken with none else than Adam and Noah. But if you had understood the mysteries of their narrations, you would have known more than you do at present ; for I doubt not the least, but that they have introduced you into the way of salvation.

W. S. Adam told me of a promise which God had made unto him ; and according to his account, it appeared that God had a special design in the generation of Seth ; but it appears from what Noah told me, that that generation had so much degenerated from their Maker, that God had determined, and did destroy the world by a flood ; and immediately after the flood, the generation of Noah was so prone to evil that but few feared God ; yet there was one called Abraham, of whom old Noah had the most exalted opinion.

S. C. How mysterious are the ways of God !

W. S. But all this is not satisfactory.

S. C. True; but you are yet too little informed.

W. S. I would like to know the reason why you are so sad and weep so much?

S. C. There are two principal causes which make me weep: the reflecting upon the dreadful destruction of this city, and the unrighteous judgments upon the righteous, as causes of this destruction; but especially the ignominious suffering and the cruel death of the innocent Lamb. Should all this not make me sad? for men to crucify, so ignominiously, him who never harmed any one. Yea, methinks I see the nails in his hands. Nay, I tell you a country ought wholly to sink into ruin on account of this unrighteous transaction.

W. S. But this is all mysterious to me. It is my desire, father, that you tell me in order, all what you know concerning it. I am completely confused in mind. I can as yet not comprehend what you mean.

S. C. I will do it cheerfully; but sorrow seizes me so much, that it weakens my understanding; and should it happen that I digress, you will have to attribute it to my old age, and to that which is so affecting. I will endeavour to confine myself as much to chronological order as possible. I wish my tongue were like unto the pen of a ready writer, that I might set before you the whole

history of this matter, as I have seen it, heard it, and read of it.

W. S. This is my heart's desire, and I will listen to you like a child desirous to learn.

S. C. I will then begin with the most remote period of time, as it is set forth to us in the Holy Scriptures, as well as by tradition and profane history ; and I will add what took place in my own time ; and explain the whole of it in detail, so that you may have a useful and correct history of the whole. Abraham, whom you saw walk with Shem, moved out of Syria at the command of God, 20 years after the death of Noah. (Gen. xii. 1.) He went into the land in which you are—made his place of residence some place in the country which you see lie before you. At that time there was a city there called Hebron, of which the old remains of a wall are yet to be seen at this day. There was a pleasant grove called the grove of Mamre : there it was where Abraham lived ; and as he was faithful to God, he made a covenant with him, that he would give him and his posterity all that country which you see around us ; although he was but a sojourner therein, having not a foot of land of his own, for all those countries were inhabited and possessed by different nations. This city, called Jerusalem, was then called Salem ; Melchisedek, a royal person, was both king and priest of it.

W. S. Oh! is this the city called Salem!
Has it been thus laid waste?

S. C. Yes, indeed, son, this is the same Salem which was built by Melchisedek; however, it did not retain that name long, but was afterwards called Jebus, and finally Jerusalem; for more than two thousand years have elapsed since the first foundation of that city was laid. But let us advert to Abraham again, in order to come to the true history of the matter. God made the promise unto Abraham, through him and his posterity all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. (Gen. xii. 3.) Oh, son, remember well of what seed Adam made this known to you, and why God preserved the posterity of Seth, of Noah, and of Abraham; namely, that he would preserve a lineage from the beginning of creation until the present; out of which should be born He in whom all blessings centre, and through whom God, in his love, had determined to dispense his blessings unto every nation upon earth.

W. S. Oh, the sovereign goodness of God!
But has this all been fulfilled or accomplished?

S. C. I will tell you the whole; but, in the first place, you ought to know in what way all this happened, so that you may both know what befell this city and the cause of its total destruction, and the fulfilling of the promises of God. Twenty-five years after this promise, contrary to every expectation,

God gave Abraham a son in his old age, whom he called Isaac; and to take away every hope, he commanded Abraham that he should offer his son Isaac as a burnt-sacrifice upon the mountain which you see before us (Gen. xxii. 2), surrounded by the old walls of the ruined city; but at that time there was not a single house there, but it was a green mountain called Moriah. But when God saw that Abraham was obedient, and went to work to offer his son, he forbade him, and restored Isaac unto him; as it were, took him from death, renewed his covenant, and the promises of the Saviour.

W. S. Had Abraham no other son?

S. C. He had an elder son by his maid-servant, Hagar, but she and her son were sent away by the Divine command, Gen. xxi. 10, in which there is a great mystery, and a greater one in remanding Isaac when Abraham was about offering him. For when I reflect on the sore trial of Abraham's faith, the implicit obedience of Isaac, and the whole circumstances of his carrying the wood upon his shoulder, ascending the mountain, how innocently he passed along, and his firm reliance upon God in the hour of dissolution—I say, when reflecting upon these things, I am constrained to admiration beyond degree, and the more so, since I saw the fulfilment of this mystery.

W. S. Father, tell me more of Isaac.

S. C. This Isaac walked in the ways of his father; was instructed in virtue. He evinced a great degree of magnanimity when persecuted and mocked of his brother Ishmael; and when he was about to be offered he submissively yielded: when he was become to be a man, he was devout and strong in the faith. He laid aside all earthly things, and exercised much in prayer. His father had, too, an exalted opinion of him, to marry him to an unbelieving woman, and therefore sent his servant to seek one for him from among his own kindred, and wedded him unto her in the fear of God. Gen. xxiv. 2.

W. S. Had this youth no communion with other young people of that day, and to fall in love with some wealthy young woman, and who was born of respectable parents, residing in the same country with his father?

S. C. How could that be, since they were but pilgrims and citizens of this world, always looking for another country, whither faith unceasingly directed them; besides, he was completely under and subject to the control of his father, that he suppressed the desires of youth, following implicitly the directions and counsels of his father.

W. S. A noble virtue, seldomly to be found; but I want to hear the end of it.

S. C. In the land towards the rising of the sun was in those days the city Nahor, where resided a virtuous young woman, called Re-

becca ; she lived with her brother Laban, a descendant of Abraham ; thither the aforementioned servant was sent with ten camels, provided with all the necessaries for his journey. Gen. xxiv. 10. The faithful servant pursued his journey, ever mindful to execute well his errand, knowing that without divine aid all his efforts would be in vain ; he prayed unto God that he would prosper him. Gen. xxiv. 12-14. As he came to a well near the above-mentioned city, behold, Rebecca came and gave him and his camels to drink, Gen. xxiv. 15 ; and, indeed, as though she knew his errand, her heart, as well as Laban's, was moved by the divine finger of Providence. When he saw her come to the house with bracelets on her arms, and with golden rings, Gen. xxiv. 30, his heart leapt for joy—his house and all he had was at the service of this worthy messenger. When he understood by whom he was sent, and what his desire was, not a single objection was urged against this marriage.

W. S. How vastly this differs from the present usages—at present gayety and riches are only sought after.

S. C. This is true, and many serious consequences result from this state of things, such as hatred, strife ; and love to God, the true bond of union, is disregarded !

W. S. How did Isaac's father behave himself ?

S. C. He committed all his concerns to God; he prayed with fervent zeal to God that His will alone might be done. And as he lifted his eyes, he saw the camels come, surrounded by a great company. Gen. xxiv. 63. It was in the evening when his worthy bride came to his father's house. She was received with great joy. The sorrowing for his mother abated, and his love toward Rebecca increased. The domestics cheerfully obeyed the new mistress of the family. The old father himself was filled with joy, to see his son joined to such an amiable and virtuous young woman.

W. S. Had the old man any other children but this one?

S. C. Afterwards he had several others, Gen. xxv. 2; yet Isaac was the only legitimate heir, and received all the blessings, and consequently the divine promise was to him, which is of more worth than all the temporal riches of this world; he was more happy than were Armatrydes the king of Assyria, Osiris of Egypt, and the astronomer Atlas of that day, all men of great renown. There were other great men at that day, Shem, the son of Noah, who was one of the happiest of his day—he was then about 900 years old, and could relate of thousands and thousands of things, as well of the antediluvian as of the postdiluvian world.

W. S. I am well aware that the paternal

blessing is more to be preferred than mere temporal things. Please to tell me who obtained this blessing from Isaac?

S. C. Oh, son, much could be said. This same Isaac had two sons, Esau to whom pertained this blessing, Gen. xxv. 26; but this silly young man did not know how to estimate this blessing, and sold his birthright to his brother Jacob for a mess of pottage. Gen. xxv. 19.

W. S. What folly! Had the young man his proper understanding?

S. C. Yes; he was like unto those who will barter the things of time and sense for heavenly things. How many do we see who will, for a season, enjoy the perishable things of time, in preference to those which are of everlasting durance; for they think heavenly things are at a distance, and they will enjoy those at hand, the things of the world.

W. S. But did not Esau repent of this act?

S. C. He did, but it was too late; his repentance was of no avail. I will tell you the whole history of it. He endeavoured to make void the transfer of his blessing, and by unfair means to deprive Jacob of this blessing; and had not Rebecca interfered, he would have succeeded in it. For when Isaac's eyes were dim on account of old age, and knowing nothing of this bartering or transferring of blessing, he sent him out with his quiver

and his bow, to take him some venison, and make him some savoury meat, and that on his return he would bless him ; but in the mean time Rebecca sent Jacob to Isaac, and he received the blessing, though she accomplished it by disquising Jacob ; yet God, who is the searcher of hearts, approved it, and thus the blessing remained upon Jacob and his offspring. Gen. xxvii. 1-5. But, give heed, what strange things took place. Scarcely had Jacob received the blessing, and had withdrawn, Esau came home with his venison, and immediately perceived that Jacob had received the blessing. Gen. xxvii. 30. His countenance was changed, his eyes sparkled, his hands threatened, and his tongue uttered vengeance against his brother, like another Cain ; and turned to his father, weeping, and prayed him for a blessing. The aged father, moved with compassion, comforted him with temporal preferments in this world ; but he was deprived of the divine promises of the future appearance of the Messiah, and other glorious and precious blessings consequent thereupon : then he only became sensible what his mess of pottage cost him ; but all his lamentation was of no avail—his weeping, his sorrowing, and his looking heavenward, were all fruitless ; the time was past—that which he had lost, was lost for ever—the die was cast.

W. S. Oh, what a great lamentation—

what complaint! But how did he further behave himself?

S. C. He behaved uncivilly—he was daily out hunting; his heart was filled with enmity against his brother—his vindictiveness was often visibly to be perceived. Gen. xxvii. 42. His two Canaanitish women did not hold their peace—spoke frequently disrespectfully of his father and mother, and caused them many sorrows. These old people saw daily his enmity increased towards his brother, and they entreated Jacob most fervently to leave his country, and go to the east, to his uncle Laban. Gen. xxviii. 1. The pious young man was obedient unto them, and prepared for the journey, taking nothing with him but his clothes and his staff.

W. S. This does not seem to agree with the promised blessing of his father.

S. C. By all means it does. True, he travelled through all that delightful and blessed country, which abounded with fine trees, such as figs, olive, and vineyards, fruitful and verdant fields. He saw cows, oxen, sheep, goats, and all manner of cattle, feeding upon the mountains. He saw rich farmers amuse themselves in singing and dancing; but he was nothing else than a pilgrim, having no abiding place.

W. S. Could this young man so accommodate himself to all these things without being dejected in mind?

S. C. Faith is powerful; yet he was not without being tempted and tried; but God the Lord was with him, and consoled him in a vision by night. Yonder, towards north, is a town called Bethel, whither Jacob came late in the evening, and laid his head upon a stone, Gen. xxviii. 11, 12; and, although this was a hard bed, his soul heard the sweetest melody desirable, for he saw heaven open, and a ladder standing which reached to heaven, upon which he beheld the angels of God descending and ascending, as if they were ready to render him any service desired; showing thereby that divine undertakings are sometimes changeable, although the end thereof may be happy. Gen. xxviii. 12. In the mean time he heard a voice assuring him of the protection of the Most High, and of all future blessings. Gen. xxviii. 13-15. The young man awoke, was astonished that the goodness of God was so remarkably displayed towards him in a country where dwelt a savage and uncultivated people, letting him see the presence and glory of God—to him appeared all things holy; the trees of the forest, the herbs in the fields seemed to bid him speed. The stone upon which he had laid his head he erected as a holy monument of this vision; he praised God and pursued his journey with joy.

W. S. But how did Esau fare?

S. C. He did not seem to get along very

well. Do you see that mountain top, south of us?

W. S. I see it.

S. C. Thither went Esau with some of his companions, living partly upon game and plunder; there he became a great lord, but he ever was uneasy in his mind. He was deprived of the divine comfort; instead of having angels for companions, as Jacob had, he had uncircumcised companions, who filled his ears with cursing, swearing, and all manner of wicked conversation. The contrast between the two brothers was as great as the difference between darkness and light.

W. S. You speak the truth, father; however, I would like to hear more of Jacob's journey.

S. C. This God-fearing son, who was strong in the faith, ultimately arrived at the city of Haran, in Mesopotamia, where was a delightful well, whither all the shepherds drove their cattle. Gen. xxiv. 1, 2. He made up his acquaintance with these, and inquired for Laban; scarcely had he began to speak, when Rachel came with her sheep. Gen. xxix. 9. You ought to have seen how this young man was enamoured with this young and fair damsel, his heart testifying that she was to be his consort, of whom his parents had told him; and although he was much fatigued, he showed a great willingness to assist his beloved in watering her sheep; he exhibited

his love for her by caressing her, and feeling affectionately kind towards his mother's brother's daughter. Gen. xxiv. 10. This intelligence was soon carried to the house of Laban, who was also enkindled with love towards him, and opened his house to this welcome guest; seemingly touched by the finger of God to show himself kindly towards Jacob. He had been there but a short time, when it was proposed to Jacob, that he should remain seven years, and serve for this amiable shepherdess. Whether this did not cause a great deal of mutual satisfaction between the two, I leave it for you to judge.

W. S. There is no stronger bond than love, nor a sweeter joy than the mutual or reciprocal love of two wooers.

S. C. This was further manifested, for the seven years appeared to Jacob to be but seven days; he did not feel the cold of nights, nor did the heat of sun make him unwilling; he attended well to Laban's sheep; and passed many an hour in talk with his beloved Rachel. He frequently entertained them with history, of the origin of the fathers, the blessings they inherited, and how pleasingly he conversed with God on his journey; and he also told them of the great recompence of faith. When we consider all things, how many a joyful hour did they not spend in the open field, even when watching the sheep—they had many pastoral songs, and other

rural music, praising God, making merry the soul, and quickening the heart, suppressing every base desire. When the seven years had expired, Jacob spoke of the wages of his service. Gen. xxiv. 21. Laban, to show him that he stood in favour with him, gave him not only Rachel, but also his daughter Leah, to be his housewives. The marriage feast was held with joy; and Jacob remained yet fourteen years more with Laban, during which time he had born to him twelve sons, who were afterwards called the twelve patriarchs or sons of Jacob.

W. S. I should suppose many other things took place in such a large family.

S. C. The tribulation this worthy man had to experience on account of these children would not be related in a short time; even Laban, his father-in-law, caused him considerable trouble; yet the horror he experienced on his return home, on account of his brother Esau, exceeds every thing else.

W. S. I have a desire to hear that.

S. C. As this pious and blessed man travelled the country quietly with his wives and children, his cattle, in order to return home to his father, whom he had not seen for twenty years, there was sent unto him sad intelligence. Behold, your brother Esau cometh to meet you with four hundred well armed men. Gen. xxxii. 6. This caused him a great deal of fear, thinking that all is lost, he

will avenge himself of me ; his wives and children cried and trembled, and he expected either to be slain, or be made a slave for ever. Jacob took refuge in God, prayed to him for his assistance, for of himself he was too weak. He divided his wives and children in different companies, also did he the same with his cattle ; and with great meekness, ready to offer his brother gifts, Gen. xxxix. 9-12, and thus he proceeded on his journey with anxiety of heart, withal in full reliance upon the mercy of God ; and as he approached his brother Esau, who was well armed, he bowed seven times towards the earth. Gen. xxxiii. 3. His small company of women and children made obeissance with great fear ; at that moment, Esau's anger was changed, Gen. xxxiii. 4; his heroes became as lambs, their shields served to protect them from the sun, and their javelins and pikes served as staves to lean upon, and seeing without astonishment their chieftain advance, bowing, and folding his arms around his brother's neck and kissing him, as though he never had any the least enmity against him. Jacob and his family rejoiced with exceeding great joy, thanking God, who controls the hearts of the mighty, directing them as it seemeth good unto him.

W. S. How joyfully they must have pursued their journey, Jacob so richly blessed with such a large family, having previously

been but poor; how strong their faith must not have grown when reflecting on this miraculous display of God's goodness.

S. C. This you may readily imagine. They travelled on, and came into the land of Canaan, where he erected a tent at Shechem. Gen. xxxiii. 18. What befell him on account of his daughter Dinah, and how two of his sons fell upon a city and caused considerable distress among the surrounding nations; this I do not intend to relate minutely, for it makes me too pensive and dejected to rehearse all the trials and difficulties of this pious man. Gen. xxxiv. At that time, another remarkable occurrence took place, which exceeds every thing of its kind. However, it is advisable not to say any thing of that at present, I am too infirm to relate all now; and it would be rather tedious for you to listen to all.

W. S. I pray you, father, please tell me that remarkable occurrence. As for myself there is nothing so pleasing to me as your discourse; even for that purpose have I come hither.

S. C. I can scarcely refrain from weeping; for it is a history replete with mysteries.

W. S. You excite my curiosity still more and more—I will pay the utmost attention.

S. C. It so happened that one of the twelve sons of Jacob, called Joseph, an honest, upright person, quite handsome, was hated

and despised of his brothers—with exceeding hatred did they oppose him. Whether he would meet in a friendly manner, speak kind to them, or serve them willingly, all this did not move them to have compassion on him. Gen. xxxvii. 4.

W. S. Hardened wretches! but had they no reason for this, their conduct towards him?

S. C. What reason could such an agreeable young man give them? But hatred is cruel. They saw that his father loved him kindly and affectionately, being the very image of his mother Rachel; his father therefore made him a coat of many colours, Gen. xxxvii. 3: this is what they were sorely displeased at, especially the children of Leah, namely, Bilhah and Zilpah, Gen. xxxvii. 2, hated him; this Joseph told his father, and thus their hatred increased towards him so much that they could not bear to see him. As the father saw their hatred increase, he loved Joseph more and more affectionately, on account of his virtuous and honest disposition. This might have been overlooked, had not other circumstances stirred up their anger anew.

W. S. And what were these?

S. C. You ought to bear in mind, that God had intended to do great things by Joseph, as it is generally the case that he exalts the humble; and God made this known

unto him in two dreams, which Joseph related unsuspectingly to his brothers. It appeared to him in a dream that they were all in one field together binding sheaves, and that his sheaves stood straight up, and all theirs made obeisance to his. The other dream was, that the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed before him. As they heard these things, they became exceedingly wrath. (Gen. xxxvii. 5, 8.) It appears that they knew of themselves that these dreams were not mere phantasma ; however, they immediately determined to prevent their fulfilment; but the Most High laughed at them. Father Jacob looked upon these dreams as prophetical. He waited for their fulfilment.

W. S. But how did things further go ?

S. C. Astonishing ! the wonders are many and great. It so happened that these brothers, while keeping their flocks, moved away a considerable distance to pasture their cattle ; and their father was desirous to hear from them. He sent Joseph to visit his brothers ; he lost himself upon the way in a field, and looked all around to see his brothers with their cattle ; his heart felt for their prosperity. But oh ! with them a different feeling prevailed ; for as he came near to them, instead of rejoicing to see him, they were highly incensed against him, and thought on his dreams. They consulted each other what to do with him. One was for casting

him into a pit; the other for murdering him; another, filled with compassion, felt in behalf of his brother, expostulating with the rest not to deal so rashly and cruelly with him. Reuben, the oldest of them, trembled with fear, thinking what a great sin it would be to slay their brother, and bring the aged father in sorrow to his grave. In the mean time the innocent lad approached to salute them with greetings from their father. He showed himself exceedingly kind and amiable towards his brothers; and as he anticipated to bring them acceptable intelligence, he was astonished to hear nothing but threatenings; he began to tremble, for the terrors of death had laid hold upon him. One accused him; another threatened to kill him. Well might this amiable young man say, I have become as a stranger to my brothers, and am not esteemed as my mother's son. He begged for mercy; but all his crying, lamentation, and begging were fruitless. They stripped him of his coat of many colours, which his father gave as a token of his love toward him. In the greatest agony of soul, he looked around to see whether he could not behold *one* that would have mercy upon him, but he found none; for those who beheld his situation with compassion dared not make any efforts to release him; he was like a stray dove persecuted of eagles. His heart failed him; his soul sighed for fear; he locked for

relief. At last Reuben hit upon an expedient to ameliorate his condition. He prevailed upon these unmerciful brothers, that they consented to cast Joseph into a dry pit: his intention was afterwards to take him out of it and restore him to his father: then the uproar became somewhat quieted, and they sat down to eat, and put Joseph into a deep pit; here he sighed to see his father's face. Oft did he think on his father; the many pleasant hours he spent in his presence, of which he was then deprived, as well as of every other human consolation. And what was still more remarkable, it appeared that all had been frustrated what was intended to be set forth by God in Joseph's dreams. You may easily imagine how he cried unto God the Most High, "God, be thou nigh unto me, for here is no helper! My enemies are for devouring me; they are as devouring lions. They have parted my clothes among them. Lord, Lord! be nigh unto me; hasten to help me!" Thus praying, weeping, and complaining, and none to comfort, his distracted mind baffled him as a ship in storm without rudder, calling, "My God, my God! how hast thou forsaken me! I cry aloud, but my help is afar off."

W. S. Oh, what overwhelming fear! it leads the soul to God, its creator and helper, in every time of need. But tell me how did his brothers behave in the mean time

Had they no compassion upon this innocent lamb?

S. C. Several of them had, especially Reuben; he did all he could to release his brother; he reasoned with them, what effect their conduct would have on a distressed and aged parent, and that they would incur a curse rather than obtain a blessing by this course of conduct; for if their father disapproved their conduct towards the Shechemites, how could he meet such a distressful event without much sorrowing. Another rose up and said, "he is worthy of death, for he made himself king; and should he ever get into power, what, think you, will be our fate? therefore it is more meet that he die, than that we and ours should be destroyed." Others, again, who were filled with hatred, cried out, "he is the cause of all the disputes and broils in our family; he carries every thing to the old man's ears, who is often displeased at us on his account. The better course will be to destroy him, then we will see what his dreams come to, which he has so presumptuously made known, and even deceived his old father thereby." The greater part of them was so much incensed that they were deprived of every sense of compassionate feeling.

W. S. How did this matter finally terminate, and what did Reuben do?

S. C. He withdrew from them with the determined resolution to assist his brother in

effecting his escape, but he was foiled in this undertaking.

W. S. This was to be regretted : still I would like to hear the end of the story.

S. C. Oh, son, the ways of the Lord are beyond our comprehension. While intensely engaged in counselling what the fate of their brother should be, one of them, Judas, looked up and beheld some merchants coming on their way to Egypt, Gen. xxxvii. 26 ; at that moment he concluded that it would be far better to sell their brother to these merchantmen, who would take him into a foreign country, than to pollute their hands in their brother's blood. Gen. xxxvii. 26, 27. Thus his dreams would prove to be equally false if he were carried into a foreign land, where he would be entirely forgotten, and be placed into very indigent circumstances. All paid attention to this proposition. They went to the pit to take him out. Joseph heard the voice of his enraged brothers. Thinking that the hour was at hand when he should fall a victim to their vengeance, he complained most anguishingly ; and after he had been taken out, he was compelled to walk to the aforementioned merchants : there he stood before them as a pitiable object, with different feelings than those when he was in his dear father's presence. Tears flowed down his pallid cheeks ; his heart quaked ; his clothes tattered and filthy, showed that he

was shamefully maltreated ; and his brothers, shaking their heads at him, saying, away with him ! away with him ! and thus, at the suggestion of Judas, they agreed to sell him for twenty pieces of silver.

W. S. Father, you are weeping again ; take more courage, and proceed with your narration.

S. C. Oh, I am thinking of another Judas, who sold an innocent person ; the history of whom I shall not relate at the present.

W. S. Proceed, if you please.

S. C. I say for twenty pieces of silver did they sell this fine young man, Gen. xxxvii. 28, who was more to be esteemed than they all. Joseph, with much sorrow and heaviness of heart, left them. Oft did he think of his brothers, of his home, and of his dear father, who could now afford him no comfort.

W. S. But what of Reuben, who had withdrawn himself from them before ?

S. C. The faithful brother went to the pit with the expectation to find Joseph there, and to help him out of it ; but, alas, he found a different state of things. Weeping and sighing was his portion ; he rent his clothes ; went as one without hope to his brothers, saying, "The young man is not here, and I, whither shall I go ! " Gen. xxxviii. 29, 30. How dare I show my face to my father ! What apology shall I make, when he shall ask me concerning Joseph ? Methinks I see his pale and

sad countenance ; the sorrow of his heart threatening him with the grave. How joyfully I should have returned home, could I have taken Joseph with me to a disconsolate father ; but now all my prospects are blasted ; I cannot see my way clear ; my own conscience accuses me of unfaithfulness ; I know not whither to turn ; I will have to forsake father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife, and children ; nay, all things, and have to go into a strange country ; if I do not find Joseph, to return home will be to me an abomination.” While thus speaking, he wept a gush of tears. All his brothers were affected with him, and were sorely distressed on account of their father. Their hearts beat within them on account of this act ; yet all their lamenting and weeping was fruitless. They might anxiously look after him, but departed he had. Some expedient was now to be resorted to that would screen them of this shameful deed, and to reconcile their father, when he should inquire for Joseph his son ; expecting him to return with good news from his brothers.

W. S. What must not have been the distressing feelings of the old man, when he had been thus deprived of his son ! But what did they tell their father ?

S. C. They killed a kid, and dipped Joseph’s coat into the blood, and sent the coat of many colours to their father, and told him,

behold, is this thy son's coat? thus we have found it in the field. Gen. xxxvii. 30, 31.

W. S. Oh, the treachery, thus to deceive their father! But what did they accomplish by this?

S. C. The father's fears and anxiety of mind are not to be described or uttered by words. He wrung his hands; he plucked out his own hair; he rent his clothes and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned plaintively for his son many days. "An evil beast has devoured my son Joseph. Gen. xxxvii. 33. The comfort of my age is no more! For I will go down into the grave to my son, sorrowing; for I am not able to express my anguish of soul." His children were for comforting him, but all was in vain. He looked upon them with a jealous eye; he only cared for Joseph; his desire was to see him; nothing in this world could afford him any consolation, because he was deprived of his beloved son. Gen. xxxvii. 35.

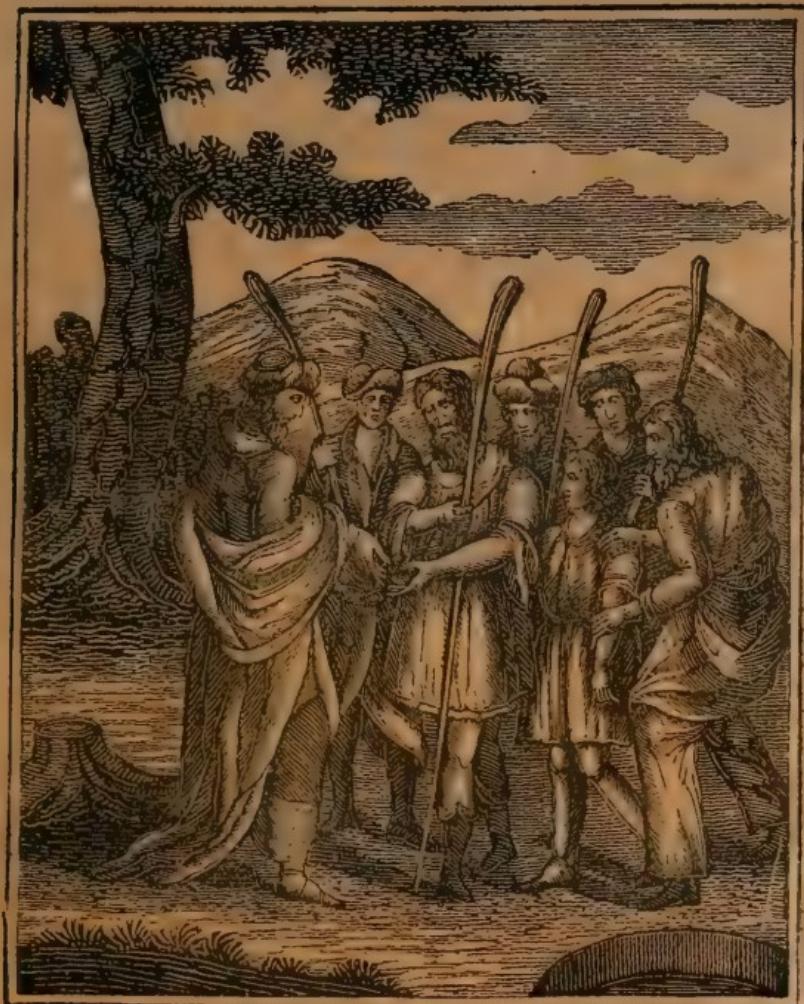
W. S. How did these brothers behave after having committed this great sin?

S. C. They found themselves deceived, for they had an accusing conscience; they had to hear their aged father complain daily, and the whole family was sad, and lamented the death of Joseph; besides, they were constantly in fear, lest their deception might be revealed or made known to their father. Hatred had consumed the bowels of their compassion, and troubled them daily, which was more

cruel than the fangs of the four-footed animal which was said to have devoured Joseph. Misfortunes and calamities befell them. They were menaced by retributive and punitive justice. The two sons of Judas who sold him died. Gen. xxxviii. 7-10. And God convinced him how he had erred in pronouncing judgment, when he condemned his son's wife for an act of which he was guilty himself. Gen. xxxviii. 24-26. The others had much to do to keep these lies concealed. Oh, how often did their consciences trouble them when they saw their father sorrowing. How often did they wish to see Joseph once more, and to restore him to his father. But it was too late now. They had to endure the sting of conscience in their breasts.

W. S. Wickedness recompenses its own masters. But be pleased to tell me what happened to Joseph when he arrived in Egypt with the merchants?

S. C. It was remarkable. These merchants brought him into the royal city, called Memphis. There was a mighty ruler, called Potiphar. He took particular notice of Joseph, who was exceedingly polite and genteel in his deportment, of amiable manners and a virtuous mind, and purchased him; Gen. xxxix. 1; and esteemed him not as a valuable servant, but regarded him as his adopted son; and as he became more and more acquainted with his fidelity, he com-



Joseph sold by his Brethren.—pag. 134.



mitted every thing to his charge, so that Joseph was considerably more esteemed and regarded than in his father's own house. He lived well, had respectable company, and an excellent house to live in, was an able economist, every one respected him, friendly communications passed daily, and he had much leisure to visit the fields and the royal places which were in that country. This all was calculated to blunt the keen desires for his father's house. His envious brothers could not rob him of this enjoyment, nor could they in the least mar his peace.

W. S. This appears to have been the fulfilment of his dreams.

S. C. By no means There were pending over his head many severe trials and difficulties. True, God desired to promote him; but in no other way than through much tribulation, of which I have to relate you a highly interesting story, although a very painful one to him. And were I to relate the whole of it, you would become weary, and time would fail me.

W. S. Touching my ownself, I should indeed like to hear the whole of the history.

S. C. In the midst of sunshine and prosperity a tempestuous storm of adversity arose, threatening the destruction of this young man. His mistress, who was not a very virtuous woman, was enamoured with Joseph. Gen. xxxvii. 7. The fire of her love in-

creased daily towards him. Oh, had it been spiritual love, it would have been promotive of his happiness ; but hers was carnal love, illicit love, as she gave him fully to understand. The young man was not of her disposition ; he was alarmed and feared. The fear of God permitted him not to yield to her desires, and openly to rebuke her did not seem to him to be the best method. He kept all this to himself for a season ; but as her illicit passions became more ardent, and she insisting upon what was unlawful, he then undertook to reason the case with her, endeavouring to persuade her to suppress her passions. He told her of her husband's virtue and fidelity, whose confidence he enjoyed, and that it would be very unbecoming in him to do such an act ; thus rewarding his past favour by one of the blackest and foulest acts that man can be guilty of, not to speak of the heinousness of such a flagrant sin as that of adultery in the eyes of God. This discourse was only as pitch in a fire, for virtue and beauty are two powerful magnets. Her love was the more enkindled ; she pestered him daily, and tempted him with many promises of riches and honour. It was to him as though one had taken him on the summit of a mountain, and showed all the riches of this world, in order to lead him from the paths of virtue.

W. S. These thoughts distract you. Do

refrain from weeping, and proceed with your narrative.

S. C. I will proceed. But when Joseph saw that she was daily more inflamed towards him, he fled to avoid her presence as much as possible. This enraged her exceedingly; for she was so completely captivated by his beauty. Her mind was completely taken up on that account. Ultimately she resolved to make the last and successful effort. She watched an opportunity when the young man should enter the house to transact his daily concerns. As he came in she laid hold upon him, and desired him to accompany her to the chamber. But this was attempting an impregnable wall. This attempt appeared to him too odious; he fled, and she held his garment in her hand. Gen. xxxix. 11, 12. That very moment this syren lure changed the tone of her voice into that of a cruel harpy; her eyes flamed like fire; her hands threatened, and she raised a wonderful cry and alarm. The hireling, the maid, and the domestics, knew not what had taken place. They came running; found her madly enraged, with Joseph's garment in her hand; complaining much concerning the violence of the Hebrew servant, whom her husband had so highly exalted, to the disturbance of the peace and comfort of the family. Gen. xxxix. 13-15. Every one was astonished. Joseph was immediately apprehended. When

his lord and master came home, his wife shed crocodile tears, complaining concerning Joseph's rude assault; to corroborate her charge, she produced the garment. Gen. xxxix. 17, 18. This enraged the good lord of the house; he reproved Joseph of ingratitude and shameful conduct towards his wife. Almost had he determined to have him executed; but when reflecting on the signal blessings his house experienced under the charge of Joseph, and thinking on his services and his manful deportment, he determined only to put him into prison. Gen. xxxix. 20. Into prison Joseph was cast, and his feet placed into the stocks. Before that he was at liberty and much honoured.

W. S. It is remarkable that falsehoods sometimes wear the appearance of plausibility. What an astonishing change. Were not many enraged at this?

S. C. Certainly. This report was soon throughout the whole city; every one spoke of it: some shook their heads and said, shameful! you faithless wretch, now you are receiving the recompense of your wicked and daring presumption. Others said, behold he is now confined; others he helped out of their bonds, let him help himself now; or let him make known his case to his God, of whom he boasted so much, and entreat him to open the bars and locks of the prison for him. Some had compassion on him,

knowing that the woman was a frivolous and imprudent woman ; but through fear they were prevented to make known their views of this matter.

W. S. But, please tell me, how did Joseph conduct himself in this critical condition ?

S. C. He directed his eyes towards heaven, crying, O, Lord, my hope is in thee ; deliver me from all my persecutors, so that they devour me not as lions ; take my case into thy hands ; deliver my soul from the sword, and my life from dogs. God, in whom he had placed his trust, forsook him not, but showed unto him his goodness. For the keeper of the prison was convinced, from the deportment and conduct of Joseph, that he was a virtuous young man, and he released him from the stocks and committed the prisoners to his charge, provided he would remain within the enclosure of the prison. Gen. xxxix. 21-23.

W. S. Did he remain long in this condition ?

S. C. Who knows whether he would have ever been released, had it not been done through a singular occurrence so ordained by the providence of God ? Two, who were in the service of the king, were cast into prison on account of misconduct ; the one was a baker and the other a butler. It happened that both dreamed dreams, which gave them considerable alarm ; the more so, because

they knew of no interpreter. The pious youth, ever ready to comfort the distressed, inquired of them why their faces were so pale. Gen. xl. 4-7. The butler disclosed the whole matter unto him; related his dream, saying, "Behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches, and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth, and the clusters bare ripe grapes; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand." Joseph, who was filled with the wisdom of God, interpreted it thus—that the butler would be released in three days and restored to his former office, and requested him to make mention of him to Pharaoh. Gen. xl. 14. The baker, understanding this reasonable interpretation, also related his dream, and looked steadfastly upon Joseph, who foretold him an ignominious death, by hanging, in three days: all was fulfilled.

W. S. Behold, how good it is to be in favour with great men; for I am of the opinion that Joseph was released through the intercession of the butler.

S. C. By no means. Do you not know that we are not to put our trust in man; and especially in those who live in sinful pleasures. The mind and affections of this butler were engaged in riotous living, and he never remembered poor Joseph, nor did he think

on those in misery ; but God, who directs all things according to the counsel of his will, heard the sighs of Joseph in prison, and knew how to devise means, and also a method to release Joseph.

W. S. I desire to hear it.

S. C. In the same hour when they were rejoicing, singing, and dancing, engaged in eating and drinking, and the butler attending to his office, and Joseph sighing and waiting in prison for two years to hear from the ungrateful butler ; thirteen years having already elapsed since the old man sorrowed for the death of his son—behold, king Pharaoh's heart failed him ; he was frightened in the night, that he trembled as an aspen leaf, caused by strange and fearful dreams ; and there was none to be found in all the land of Egypt, among the wise and learned astrologers, who could interpret his dream. They stood as children, and beheld the disconsolate king. His whole court was alarmed : all their music ceased ; nothing but sad countenances were to be seen. The chief butler now began to reflect, and remembered Joseph, and told the king of this Hebrew youth, how he had interpreted one of his dreams. Joseph was immediately brought out of the prison, and costly raiment put on him, and brought before the king, who related his dreams unto him. As he thought, there were seven fat kine came up from the

water ; afterwards seven lean kine, which devoured the fat ones, without it being perceived at their appearance. The other dream was concerning seven fine and full ears of corn, which were in like manner devoured by seven ill-furnished ears. Joseph, giving the honour to God, expounded the dreams, saying, they had allusion to seven plentiful years, which would be succeeded by seven barren years, causing such a general famine that all would be eaten up of the seven former fruitful years ; and that it would be highly expedient to appoint some wise, judicious individual to lay up stores of produce, so that the people would not perish in the seven years of famine. Gen. xli. 36. The king and his council were astonished at this wise interpretation, and the good advice he gave ; and after considerable consultation, they came to the conclusion that Joseph was the only suitable person to hold this station. Whereupon the king took the ring off from his own finger and put it on Joseph's, and dressed him in purple linen, and put a golden chain upon his neck, and had him ride in his second chariot, and had them all proclaimed aloud, this is the ruler of all Egypt ; and thus Joseph was proclaimed ruler over all Egypt. Gen. xli. 49.

W. S. Oh, the great wisdom of God ; and the wonderful change ! !

S. C. There were many collected before

him, every one was astonished, his enemies trembled and prayed, fearing to receive the just recompense of their treachery. The common people shouted, and rejoiced to see ZAPHNATH-PAANEAH (for so they called him) promoted to this exalted station, and all bowed their knees before him; and they were astonished still more when they saw the foundations laid for the storehouses, into which to collect all the superabundant produce of the land. Even some of the oldest thought it incredible that the river Nile should thus irrigate the land for seven years in succession, and with the gentle beams of the sun so much enrich the land as to make it superabundantly productive; many rejoiced in anticipation of this event, every one expecting to become rich. The mechanic did eat common bread; nay, the poorest of them began to live in luxury. It was pleasant to the eyes to behold the verdant meadows, in which the cattle fed, and all of very fine appearance, even as Pharaoh saw them in his dream. It appeared ridiculous to some that Joseph should collect so much grain, when every thing grew in rich abundance. However, they were ignorant of the counsel of God.

W. S. But what took place when these years of plenty were ended?

S. C. In the first year, they saw that the waters in the Nile were considerably abated,

because there was but little rain or snow on the mountains, to swell the waters of the Nile; and the heat of the sun became exceedingly intense, parching and drying up all before his rays; the cattle were seeking grass and water, and the farmer had no harvest to put up; yet all this was little regarded at first, because they could live upon what they had left from the former year. But the next year they were more sorely pressed, there was nothing to be seen but sorrowful mothers and weeping children on account of hunger, which troubled them; it was a lamentable sight to behold—what crying and lamentation. Oh, how often did they look towards the south to see a cloud rise, and went frequently to see whether the waters of the Nile were not increasing, then flowing only in a small rivulet, scarcely water sufficient for the crocodile and the fishes thereof. Then Joseph, as a wise father, opened the store-houses, and gave each according to his wants, who had money to purchase, and thus he enriched the king exceedingly.

W. S. That was a necessary consequence. But did this famine extend to other adjacent countries?

S. C. Yes, and especially throughout the land of Canaan, lying in the same climate, and which was watered by the former and latter rain; there the heavens were as brass, and the earth as iron; the people beheld each

other in sorrow, for there was no store laid up, and the fields appeared as a barren waste.

W. S. It is lamentable to hear it related. But was it not generally known that corn could be obtained in Egypt?

S. C. Certainly it was; for they saw camels and asses pass daily through the country, laden with corn sacks, which they had obtained from ZAPHNATH-PAANEAH, whose wisdom was spoken of by every nation, and who sent corn abroad to the comfort of the starving. A remarkable history has just occurred to my mind, in which the prophecy of the aforementioned dreams has been strikingly fulfilled.

W. S. I am exceedingly anxious to hear that; I pray you, relate it.

S. C. It came to pass, that Joseph's brothers, their wives and their children, had to suffer for the want of corn; and were admonished by their father when he saw that there was corn in Egypt, that they should go down thither; and they went upon their way with their asses and their sacks, and when they arrived in the royal city, they applied to the ruler of that country to obtain corn for their money.

W. S. What a providential direction! But what happened?

S. C. They appeared before the lord, sitting upon his throne, and surrounded by a

reverent looking counsel. When they beheld this glory, they fell upon their faces before him, Gen. xlvi. 6, and these were the sheaves which made obeisance to Joseph's sheaves in the dream.

W. S. Thus they confirmed the truth of the dream, and knew it not, and did willingly that which they were determined on before to frustrate. Oh, the wisdom of God ! how incomprehensible ! But how did Joseph behave himself towards them ?

S. C. He knew them well, yet he made himself strange unto them, in order to test them severely, for they well deserved it. Gen. xlvi. 7-9. He spoke roughly unto them, and called them spies ; however, they gave him an account of their families, told him of their aged father, the number of brothers—that the youngest was with their father, and that one was no more, Gen. xlvi. 13: although they stood before him, they knew him not ; nor had they the least idea that he was their supposed lost brother, but now newly arisen, and that was so highly exalted. What deceived them still more, Joseph had an interpreter, as if he could not understand what they said among themselves.

W. S. That was very judiciously managed on the part of Joseph, evincing a great deal of lenity and wisdom, that he did not reward them according to their merits.

S. C. In him there was not the least dis-

position to avenge himself, but he had a tender compassion towards them ; he sighed and wept with them, thinking on all what had taken place between him and them in by-gone days. He showed them every mark of kindness, had their sacks filled with corn, and put their money in the mouth of the sacks, Gen. xlvi. 25 ; yet, to prove their honesty, and to remind them of their misdeeds, he ordered Simeon to be bound in their presence, Gen. xlvi. 23, and to keep him safe till they had brought their youngest brother, Benjamin, before him ; nay, he threatened to confine all of them if they would resist. This pricked them to the heart ; their consciences gnawed them, and they accused each other ; this is what we merited, when we saw our brother Joseph in anguish of soul, and had no pity on him. Reuben said, "Spake I not unto you, do not this sin against him ; and ye would not hear ? therefore, behold, also his blood is required." Gen. xlvi. 22. Whether this did not touch the heart of Joseph, who knew the whole matter, I leave for you to judge.

W. S. Father, I readily believe that this Simeon lamented with deep contrition all his cruelty when confined in the dark prison. But what took place on their journey home-wards ?

S. C. They had much conversation on what had taken place, and were much asto-

nished, especially when they found their money in their sacks; for they knew not what this meant, Gen. xlii. 27, 28; and when they came home to their father, he was much afflicted, because he did not see Simeon, and much more so, when they told him that they dare not again appear in the presence of the ruler of Egypt, unless they bring their youngest brother with them. Gen. xlii. 30. The old father nearly fainted, thinking that he should be thus deprived of his children; he said, "Me have you bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and you will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." Gen. xlii. 36.

W. S. I pity the old patriarch who had to suffer so much on account of his children. But how did it further go?

S. C. When they had eaten nearly all their corn, the old man was not to be prevailed on to leave his youngest son go. One offered to stand for his safety, another was for pledging his children for his safe return, but all availed not; the father was so much troubled that he could put no confidence in them; at last he was constrained to consent on account of the famine—and they started with Benjamin, and some presents for the lord of the land.

W. S. Thus we see that necessity knows of no law, breaking the most determined resolution of man!

S. C. They appeared before Joseph, Gen. xlivi. 15, who received them gladly; he looked upon his brother Benjamin—they all prostrated themselves, and thus were verified the dreams of Joseph. He ordered an excellent dinner for them, Gen. xlivi. 16; this caused them to wonder greatly, especially when they were seated around the table in the order of their ages, and that Benjamin was served with a larger portion than the rest. They were eating, drinking, and rejoicing; but on the day following, they were exceedingly dismayed; for Joseph had their sacks filled with corn, and also put their money therein; and put his silver cup into Benjamin's sack to test their honesty, Gen. xliv. 1, 2; they knowing nothing of all this, pursued their journey rejoicing, with the full hope of returning the son to his father, and thus all would be well again. They boasted much of the hospitality of the ruler, and how gracious they were with him; but with astonishment did they see one of the stewards coming mounted on a steed, crying, Stop, you men, you have committed some evil thing, you have stolen my Lord's cup, you have rewarded evil for good. Gen. xliv. 5, 6. When the steward had overtaken them, they defended themselves, saying, This be far from us—with whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bond-men. Gen. xliv. 7-9. So

confident were they in their minds, an examination was entered into, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Gen. xliv. 12. Then they wept and rent their clothes, saying, we have fallen upon evil times. They were then taken back, and brought before Joseph, who reproved them, saying, "What deed is this you have done? did you not know that such a man as I can certainly divine," Gen. xliv. 15; and he was for retaining Benjamin as a servant; they stood amazed—they were horror-stricken. Judah set forth in glowing colours the distress of their father, saying, that if he were not to get to see Benjamin he would die, shedding tears and offering himself as a hostage; the other brothers trembled for fear, and did not know what to do; for them to remain was not possible, and to return home without Benjamin was alike impossible, on account of their father's sorrowing.

W. S. But tell me, how could such a compassionate man as Joseph look upon the distress and the anguish of his brothers' souls, and not have pity upon them?

S. C. Until then he was only testing their sincerity, but now he could keep himself no longer concealed; he commanded all to leave the room, then wept aloud and shed many tears, saying, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And they could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. Gen.

xlv. 1-3. He said to them, Come near to me, your brother Joseph whom you sold into Egypt; and they rejoiced as though they had found one risen from the dead. My thoughts digress, and I am led away to think of another similar history, but I must collect my mind a little. Joseph spoke friendly to them and comforted them, telling them not to be alarmed, for he had forgotten their treatment towards him, Gen. xlv. 5; he bid them to return home to their father, and tell him that it was his desire they should all move down into Egypt, and escape the famine of five coming years; telling them that it was God who had by this means, and for the purpose of preserving many alive, brought him into Egypt. And he sent them home with many presents, chariots, and servants.

W. S. What an affecting history! and how did it go with the father?

S. C. At first, when he heard the unexpected glad tidings, he could scarcely credit it, Gen. xlv. 26, for the death of his son was so lastingly impressed upon his mind, that the account they gave of Joseph appeared to him to be but a dream or some delusion; but when he saw the chariots which Joseph had sent to carry him down to Egypt, his spirit revived, and said, It is enough, I am satisfied; Joseph my son is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die. Gen. xlv. 27, 28. The whole family, men, women,

and children, seventy souls in all, with a great many cattle, which filled the air with noise, were all brought together. Gen. xlvi. 1. Joseph, exceedingly anxious to see his father, had his chariot in readiness, and, in company with some of his counsellors, went up to meet Israel, his father, at Goshen. There was much weeping when he met him—he fell on his father's neck and wept a good while. He took them all and put them into a good part of the country in Egypt. The pious patriarch appeared before king Pharaoh, with whom he found grace, and related to him his past life, his age, and all connected with it, Gen. xlvii. 7-10, and took up his residence joyfully among that people, where he yet lived seventeen years, contemplating the past events of his days, and acknowledged the wonderful dealings of God; and felt much anxiety of soul for his children, admonishing them in love, with paternal affection, and blessed them on his dying bed, beginning with Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, Gen. xlviii. 14, 15, telling them all, and especially Judah, that the sceptre would not depart from him and his brothers till the Shiloh come, who is the seed of the woman promised unto the fathers. It was thus that the tribe of Israel came into Egypt agreeably to the prophecy concerning the sons of Jacob. Gen. xlix.

W. S. This narration pleases me exceed-

ingly; for it is a history replete with wonders. However, I would be much pleased to hear what took place during the other five years' famine. It is probable that the people suffered considerably.

S.C. Their sufferings are not to be uttered or described. O, the distress of famine; all Egypt, Thebaides, Lybia, Cyrene, and Ethiopia were as a barren desert; lamentation and weeping filled the land. The bright sun, with his genial rays, was terror unto them; the lucid stars adorning the heavens seemed as enemies; they would have sooner seen them shrouded by the thick clouds of darkness and storm, than to behold their glorious splendour; they desired for the terrible thunders, and hurricanes, and tempestuous rains which often destroyed houses, wrecked ships, and tore up trees by their roots; but one barren year succeeded another still more barren, without rain, leaving no hope of plentiful seasons; their misery increased as their days passed on. What was laid up in store they had consumed—they sold their cattle and brought their money unto Joseph, entreating him most earnestly not to suffer them to perish for hunger's sake. Every one being thus in distress, all was soon consumed, and there was no employment for them, to labour for the means of subsistence; their own flesh they could not eat; at last they even sold their own

wives and children, and all they had to procure the means wherewith to obtain the necessaries of life: there was great weeping and lamentation. The priests of Isis* lifted their eyes heavenward, and offered sacrifices to reconcile their goddesses. However, neither *Isis*, nor Soraphis,† nor Esculapius, nor any other god or goddess had power to procure them assistance, or to relieve them from their sore distress, but stood as miserable wooden idols, without being able to relieve the miseries of their wretched devotees!

W. S. And after these miserable men had sold their children, and spent their money, what remedy did they then resort to, to protract their lingering and miserable existence?

S. C. The compassionate Joseph received them as the king's servants, and provided for them during the famine.

W. S. So the wealthy were better off than the poor?

S. C. It appeared to be the case at first,

* *Isis*, a celebrated deity of the Egyptians. The worship of this deity was universal in Egypt. They believed that the yearly and regular inundation of the Nile proceeded from the abundant tears which *Isis* shed for the loss of *Osiris*, her brother, whom *Typhan* had basely murdered.

The priests of *Isis* were obliged to observe perpetual chastity, their heads were closely shaved, and they always walked barefooted, and clothed themselves in linen garments—they never eat onions, abstained from salted meat, and were forbidden to eat the flesh of sheep and hogs.—*Trans.*

† An Egyptian God had a temple at Memphis, one at Alexandria, and one at Canopus.

but they soon were all on an equality, for when they had spent all their money, they also sold their fields and landed possessions, which they had inherited from their ancestors, and parted with them reluctantly ; but necessity, which knows no law, compelled them. For the oppression of hunger was great ; they walked the streets like spectres—like living skeletons did they appear. Every morning some were found dead in their beds ; some in the streets of the city and elsewhere ! The misery—the universal misery—of all Egypt is not to be described by words. Often did they go weeping to the river Nile to see the waters increase ; but all their expectations were blasted ; they knew not what to do. There was no remedy at hand. They could not enter the storehouses by force. They assembled in multitudes before the ruler, weeping most bitterly, saying, “ Why do you let us famish ? give us to eat, and take us servants, that we may serve the king.” Thus Joseph purchased all Egypt with its inhabitants, and made them the possessions of Pharaoh.

W. S. You are telling me wonderful things !

S. C. Oh, son, were I to tell you all which happened during this time, in this and other countries, you would hear many wonderful things ; but I dare not digress, lest I exhaust myself too much.

W. S. It is true; nor would I desire to trouble you too much; but since you told me how Israel came into Egypt, please let me hear how they came out.

S. C. You must know that they did not remove till two hundred and fifteen years afterwards; during which time they had many difficulties, trials, and adversities. For fifty-six years after they came into the land of Egypt, Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten. Gen. l. 22-26. And in a few years after his death, according to Amasis, Amenophis* ascended the throne. He saw how the children of Israel, through the Divine blessing, multiplied and increased in strength and riches, because they possessed the most fertile lands, and prospering, he became alarmed lest they should subdue all Egypt: he determined to bring them into subjection, and forgot all the blessings and riches which the country enjoyed and possessed through the instrumentality of Joseph. He oppressed them severely, and compelled them to labour hard and toil daily in making and burning bricks and tiles. They had to carry sand from the Nile to make bricks and mortar for building splendid houses, towers, and huge walls around the city. They were compelled to labour under the hot rays of a scorching sun, and beneath them a parched earth; the sweat streaming

* Sometimes called Ramezes Miamoun.—*Trans.*

from their faces, while their feet had to endure intolerable heat arising out of the earth and their faces roasting from attending the burning kilns ; their overseers urging them to press on with their work. Their sufferings are not to be described.

W. S. They must have often thought upon the liberties of their ancestors · the golden times they had under Joseph · when their cattle were in the rich pastures of the fertile lands of Goshen · when they had milk in abundance ; their sheep well clad with wool when they could promenade their delightful parks and groves ; and their fruit trees bearing plentifully

S. C. None was indulged, neither old nor young, neither weak nor strong, noble or ignoble ; no matter how learned soever how virtuous, how honourable, they were no more indulged or lenity shown toward them than to the oxen who were made for the yoke.

W. S. Oh. the great and insupportable load ·

S. C. When this cruel tyrant Amenophis, saw that, notwithstanding all this barbarous treatment, this people increased by the blessing of God ; and having understood that it had been predicted that one should arise from the Hebrews who would injure his kingdom, he hit upon another expedient He promulgated a decree that all the Hebrew

male children should be destroyed, and only to let the female children live. He instructed the midwives to that effect, so soon as the males were born to drown them. Ex. iv. 15, 16.

W. S. Oh, shocking cruelty !

S. C. There was much lamentation and weeping among the Hebrew mothers. That which was a great blessing to them before, seemed to them as a curse now ; they dreaded their deliverance. Instead of it being a season in which they looked for deliverance from pains of labour or travail, it was the approach of hearing the distressing intelligence, "*A son is born.*" All the people of Goshen were dismayed ; their houses were filled with lamentation and weeping !

W. S. I am astonished that God did suffer his people to be so severely afflicted.

S. C. God frequently permits tyrants to oppress his people, for two special reasons ; the first is, to prove, to try them ; the other, to overreach tyrants in their wisdom, and to show that they can do nothing beyond their set bounds ; for this Pharaoh* was put to open shame in this cruel barbarity by Divine wisdom.

W. S. In what way ?

S. C. God, who governs the children of men, prevailed on the midwives not to regard the decrees of this cruel king ; and he

* Pharaoh was the general name of the earlier kings of Egypt.—
Trans.

even ordained it so, that Amenophis brought up the very man of whom he apprehended so much evil; for one of the Hebrew women of the tribe of Levi hid her son;* three months afterwards she took and put him in a little boat of bulrushes daubed with slime and pitch, to resist the water and keep it out, exposing him in the flags on the shallows of the Nile; and there the king's only daughter, called Thermutis, coming to the water to bathe, and seeing the child, took him up, and being well pleased with him, and God operating on her heart, she brought him to her father's house and nursed him as her own child, and called him Moses, because she had drawn him out of the water. This Moses was such an exceeding fair child, that all looked upon him with astonishment; besides he was remarkable for his precocity of understanding. He was liberally educated; so that he became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and many other mysteries, in which God endowed him with penetration. And this was the man by whom the children of Israel were to be conducted out of Egypt, to the great detriment of that kingdom: this was presaged unto Moses when yet a lad. On a certain day when the king was dandling the child, his daughter took the king's crown and placed it on

* Clemens says that when Moses's parents circumcised him, they called him Joachim.—*Trans.*

Moses's head, he thrust it to the ground and trampled thereon. Although this troubled the king, yet he could not effect the death of Moses ; but contrary to his resolution to destroy him, he had to raise him to the great disadvantage of his own kingdom ; although this did not happen in the days of Amenophis, but only eighty years afterwards.

W. S. So then many things happen in the process of time ?

S. C. Yes, certainly, for after Amenophis had reigned thirty-two years, he was succeeded by Orus, who reigned thirty-eight years. During his time Moses grew to be a man mighty in words and deeds, and was highly esteemed by the people. When he was forty years old, and saw no end to the afflictions of his brethren, and his heart yearning for them, he forsook all the pleasures of the court ; such as being called by honoured titles ; his influence in the court ; having the name of being a prince of the land of Egypt ; the sumptuous royal feasts ; the company of musicians ; the wearing of golden chains, rings, precious stones ; the abundance of gold, and every thing that the heart of man could desire. All this he did not regard ; he forsook the court, choosing rather to be afflicted with his people. True, it appears strange to the world that he would deny himself of all these advantages, and to go as a wanderer into a strange land. But

he disregarded all this; for he had his eye fixed on the invisible One, as though he saw him. His brothers gave him no encouragement, although he came to redeem them; for they mocked at him. They could not believe that he would renounce so much for their sakes; so he was obliged to flee into the wilderness* to escape the vengeance of an angry king. At last he came to a priest of Midian, whose daughter Zipporah he married, and then remained with his father-in-law keeping his sheep; wielding a shepherd's wand instead of a sceptre. Instead of a royal crown he wore thorns; for a golden cup of wine, he had a pitcher of water; instead of sweet music, the bleating of lambs; for a downy bed, the open field; for purple linen, a common wardrobe; goats were his chancellors. There he was, the rejected shepherd by his brethren, and reprobated by the noble. Where was his hope and consolation, for which he had bartered his pleasures? for it appeared all was in vain. Long had he been a pilgrim. You may suppose that until forty years should have expired, he would have forgotten all about his brothers, and that it appeared as if God had

* It is thought and believed by many, that while Moses was retired in the wilderness, that he wrote the Book of Job; intending, that by a most admirable example of patience, he might comfort the Israelites under the weight of their oppressions in Egypt; as also the Book of *Genesis*, to inform them of the wonderful works of God, and his distinguished care for the Jews.—*Trans.*

forsaken him ; but he looked to a future period. A striking antitype of that great shepherd who was yet to come.

W. S. What constancy displayed by this pious man ! But what did further take place ?

S. C. After the death of Orus, Acengeres succeeded to the throne, and reigned twelve years. After him reigned Achorus for eight years. About this time there was a wise man in Egypt, called Trismegistus, of whom the city Thermoplis was called. This Trismegistus was a man of fine acquirements ; he foretold that a great person would arise, of whom we shall make mention hereafter. I could tell you many things more concerning Belgio, the king of the Celts ; of Cecrops,* the founder of Athens, and patron of the Grecian schools, and many others ; but at the present, we will confine ourselves to that part of history which may prove profitable to you.

W. S. That is perfectly right, father. Please to proceed with your narrative.

S. C. Pharaoh Cenchres succeeded Achorus. There was a deluge† in Thessaly during

* Cecrops, a native of Sais, in Egypt, who led a colony to Attica about 1556 years before Christ.

† This deluge, commonly called the Deucalion flood, which chiefly happened in Thessaly, according to the relation of some writers, was produced by the inundation of the waters of the river Pheneus, whose regular course was stopped by an earthquake, near mounts Ossa and Olympus. According to Xenophon, there were no less than five deluges. But the principal one, the Deucalion, happened 1503 years before Christ.—*Trans.*

the reign of king Deucalion. But when Cenchres had reigned fifteen years, and did not cease oppressing the children of Israel, and the time of which God spake unto Abraham, four hundred and thirty years, having expired, God revealed himself unto Moses in a most miraculous manner. When he was in the wilderness, God commanded him to go into Egypt, to the above-named Pharaoh Cenchres, and demand of him to let the children of Israel go into the wilderness to serve him. Ex. iv. 18. Pharaoh Cenchres would not consent to this; and after Moses had shown him, by signs and wonders, that he was sent from God, he commanded all his wise men and magicians, among whom were Jannes and Jambres, the chief ones, to appear before him. These also did perform wonders and signs before the king, and withstood Moses and his brother Aaron, and thus did Pharaoh not regard Moses's signs and wonders, Ex. vii. 9-12, but increased the tasks imposed upon the children of Israel; for they were compelled to make bricks by day, and gather the straw by night which it required for the bricks: whereas they were furnished straw beforehand, and thus the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and accused him that he was the cause of their increased misery.

W. S. Oh, the great temptation!

S. C. At last God visited Egypt with ten

successive plagues; so that the Egyptians plainly saw that their country was ruined, their cattle slain, their waters become putrid, their houses and ovens filled with frogs. Ex. viii. 8-12. Their splendid palaces, their parks, where they were wont to amuse themselves, were filled with thick darkness, where they were sitting as though they were bound, so that they felt no disposition to move about; nor could they without groping in thick darkness. Besides this, in every house there were some dead bodies, and the streets filled with lamentation; one meeting the other, saying, "Oh, my son died last night, my only son, my only heir." Yea, the king's palace shared the same fate; for the young prince was also lying at the very jaws of death; the noble men and the noble women, yea, all had some dead bodies in their houses. Therefore, they came unto the king, entreating him with tears and trembling hands, that he would leave Israel depart. Besides this, the king found himself greatly perplexed on every hand; he not only gave them permission to go, but he was urging them to leave the lands, Ex. xii. 33; obliging them to take their dough, and bake it as well as they could on their way. They collected from every town and village; and their number was six hundred thousand, besides women and children, and the mixed multitude which also went with them. They then held the last

feast in Egvpt, and the Passover, not only in remembrance of their exodus from Egypt, but it also had reference to the innocent lamb which was slain in my time.

W. S. Father, you know a great many astonishing things to relate. Be pleased to let me hear something more of this matter.

S. C. They went joyfully ; some carrying their moveables ; others were driving their cattle , some leading the laden camels and asses : others were carrying silver, gold, and precious stones, which they had *borrowed** from the Egyptians. The women carried their dough, which was left on the passover, for it was a *flight* ; for they had not time to bake what was left. And as they pursued their journey, and approached the Red Sea, they were terror-stricken to see such an innumerable host equipped with swords and javelins in pursuit of them. The mountains were covered with cavalry, riding full speed, bent upon overtaking them. Ex. xiv. 1-9. The king himself, in person, was among them, breath-

* **BORROWED.**—This action has been treated by libertines and freethinkers in a very ludicrous and blasphemous manner. But if the case be impartially examined, there is very little reason to object. The original word, here translated *borrowed*, properly signifies *to ask, without any promise of making a return of what was on such asking voluntarily granted* ; so that nothing of fraud or violence is included in this notion. And as we may suppose that, in their present terror, the Egyptians were willing to comply with the request of the Israelites, convinced at last how very unjustly and severely they had used them, and how much their safety depended upon dismissing them honourably, surely, what was thus freely given, the Israelites had a right to keep.—*Trans.*

ing out threatenings against them from afar, saying, they shall return again to Egypt. Then there was a cry raised, "Oh, had we but remained in Egypt!" Ex. xiv. 10-12. The women wrung their hands and plucked out their hairs; the men murmured against Moses, their leader; but the patient prince, comforted of God, who had condescended, was ever ready to protect his people from the assaults of Pharaoh. Ex. xiv. 13, 14. When this mighty host approached, and they had the Red Sea before them, trembling for fear, God displayed his power in this critical moment, for the sea separated itself; the waters stood as crystal walls to prepare them a way to pass safely through. Ex. xiv. 15. 21. Moses advanced, and the others followed, until they all safely landed on the opposite shore. Ex. xiv. 22.

W. S. What a remarkable, unheard-of passing through! But what did king Pharaoh and his host do?

S. C. He thought that this passage was also prepared for him, and thinking they would flee before him, he pursued them, Ex. xiv. 23; and got his horsemen to advance, whose number was 50,000; and he followed them in chariots; but when in the midst of the deep, he was overwhelmed by the mighty hand of God, through fearful visitations of fierce tempests, terrible thunders, lightnings, hail and rain, so that they began to flee in

horrible confusion; for their chariot wheels were taken off, so that they drove heavily. His warriors trembled and feared greatly, and were overtaken unexpectedly. Their retreating was impeded; for the standing walls of water began to close in upon them on all sides. To swim availed not, for they were too far from the shore and the water too deep; wishing that they had never pursued them was useless, for they were now convinced that all their attempts to fight against God were vain; but it was too late; they began to sink by thousands until there was none left.

W. S. What a glorious deliverance to the children of Israel! Did they rejoice?

S. C. They stood upon the dry land praising God, that their enemies, whose dread tyranny they feared, had been swallowed up by the deep. The dead bodies of men and horses, and also chariot wheels, were seen swimming on the face of the waters. The beach was literally lined with soldiers' clothes, pennants, flags, bows, arrows, and all manner of war instruments. The dead were innumerable!

W. S. There must have been great fear, lamentation, and weeping, in Egypt when they heard that the king, with his whole army, was drowned in the sea.

S. C. Not only in Egypt, but also throughout the circumjacent countries. At that

time there was a king reigning in Assyria, called Ascadotes; among the Greeks were known Cecrops and Erestines, who built the temple of Apollo in Delos. And about thirty years afterwards king Dardanus built the city of Troy. Cenchres Achères was made king over Egypt, and he was succeeded by Chères; and after him, Dardanus received the kingdom; but not one of them dared molest or persecute the children of Israel.

W. S. I would like to know what further befell this people, and how they came into this land?

S. C. Oh, son, many other remarkable things happened; for this people did not enter into this land without a great many trials and temptations. To relate all their difficulties would weary your patience.

W. S. I entreat you, give me at least a sketch of their sufferings, if your strength of body will permit.

S. C. Do you see a high mount south of us?

W. S. I see something of the kind.

S. C. There is a wilderness beginning at the foot of that mountain, extending into Egypt, abounding with parched sandy barrens, and there is very little water there. The children of Israel came first into that wilderness, and they soon were in want of all the necessaries of life; but contrary to all their expectations, God provided them

with bread from heaven. The water, which was bitter before, now became sweet and agreeable to the taste. Ex. xv. 22-25. At a time when there was no water, nor the least hope that any could be gotten—for the heavens were as brass, the earth as iron—there was crying, there was weeping and lamentation in every tent. In vain did their dear little ones weep; and in vain did the mothers look upon them with compassion. The cattle panted on account of the intense heat. There was no water—a cool breeze was medicine to them. The sun, whose genial rays were always a blessing, was to them a curse; for his burning beams beat sorely upon them, there being no clouds, no fogs or mist, to screen them from his bright rays. Then it was that God did, in their great distress, bring forth water from a hard, flinty rock, and made it yield water in abundance, to the great consolation of those distressed souls, who came by thousands to quench their ardent thirst, and to refresh their souls. Ex. xvii. 4-7. In like manner, when they had no bread, and a starving multitude of six hundred thousand was looking for something to satisfy their craving appetites—there being neither wheat, nor corn, or any thing else to support their dying bodies—then did God send them bread from heaven. He rained from heaven a small round thing as small as the hoarfrost on the ground, call-

ed manna,* and each filled his basket, Ex. xvi. 14, 15, to take his family, in order to satisfy their craving appetites. They needed no condiments, for this manna was palatable to all : nor needed they stores or granaries to hoard it up, for it lay every morning at their very doors, and need but gather it, and to praise God cordially for this distinguishing favour, which lasted during their forty years' sojourning in the wilderness.

W. S. What do you say, father ; were they travelling forty years before they came into this land ? Was the way so long and tedious, or were the mountains which they passed over so exceedingly high ?

S. C. Oh, this was not the reason ; but because of their unbelief—their disbelieving the power of the Almighty. Neither did they dare leave this country, for the inhabitants thereof were giants, enormous in stature ; their weapons were proportionate to their bodies, and terrible. They did not regard the children of Israel more than grasshoppers which are trampled under foot. Besides the country abounded with mountains, and the cities were well fortified by strong and high walls ; to all human appearances it was impossible for them to enter the land. Of this they had been apprized through the

* At first sight the children of Israel cried out in surprise, *manhu !* which signifies *what is this ?* From which this heavenly food was called *manna*.—*Trans.*

spies sent out by them, who had spied out the whole land. Ex. xiii. and xiv. They brought as many grapes with them as two men could carry ; besides the land abounded with olives, figs, honey, pomegranates, wheat, barley, and the like ; but it appeared to them impossible to enter the land. The spies wept and sighed, and caused a great lamentation in the camp. Mothers pressed their children to their breasts, saying, "To what are you born ! are you to die in this desert, or fall victims to the cruel enemy ? Oh, that we never had left Egypt ! Why did we follow this Moses ? He has deceived us terribly. Is this the land which flows with milk and honey ? Swords, weapons of war, are in readiness to slay us by the hands of these giants !" The children, alarmed by the weeping of their mothers, made bitter lamentation, filling the whole encampment with weeping and wailing ! The men quaked for fear : some ran and gathered stones to stone Moses and Aaron. They had forgotten the signal blessings which they had received at the hands of God. There was great murmuring among the people ; none would go up to the promised land ; and they left their weapons lie. Thus their conduct provoked God that he decreed they should wander forty years in the wilderness, till all perished except two who put their trust in him.

W. S. I perceive, from all what you have

said, that God wills we should exercise faith even in things that appear impossible to us, so that his doings may be the more gloriously displayed.

S. C. You are correct in that matter.

W. S. I readily believe that during this long period, many things befell them.

S. C. All that happened to this people is not to be described. At one time they wept, and anon they rejoiced ; one day every thing seemed to prosper, and the next day their hopes were all blasted. They appeared to be penitent ; they seemed humbled ; and as Moses had ascended the mountain to receive the commandments and the law, it appeared as though their hearts' desire was to know the will of God. Ex. xix. 8. But before forty days had expired they made themselves an idol. They worshipped the golden image of the Egyptian ox, Apis ; they worshipped him with singing and all manner of musical instruments. Ex. xxxii. 1-6. It was truly lamentable to behold such a scene. The whole multitude seemed to be filled with this folly. They were for worshipping many other strange gods. They desired to eat flesh and murmured against the sweet manna. Some were quarrelling with Moses, and had taken stones to stone him, and had determined to be controlled no longer by him. They were guilty of many more similar acts.

W. S. These are strange things. But how did it further go?

S. C. Oh, how should things further go! God would often let them follow the evil imaginations of their own hearts; he gave them flesh to eat. There went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp; they were spread so numerous roundabout the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, two cubits high upon the face of the earth. At first there was great rejoicing among this lustful people; they began to pluck, cook, and eat. It appeared like a general marriage feast; but this was soon changed, for they fell and died like flies.

W. S. Thus I hear that many died on account of their own selfish obstinacy.

S. C. Yes, the majesty of God was terrible against those who had sinned, frequently punishing them severely. At one time fire fell from heaven, consuming many: another time fiery serpents were sent among them, Num. xxi. 6, pursuing them, winding themselves around their bodies, so that they did not know whither to flee; many were destroyed by the biting of these serpents. Terrible to behold, many fine persons destroyed by the speckled viper; but it was still more terrible when the earth opened beneath them, and swallowed up a whole company of them;

all their bitter lamentations did not avail ; they went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation. Num. xvi. 31-33.

W. S. Alas, had they to suffer all this ! Oh, how miserable man is !

S. C. Therefore God, through Moses, spake of another prophet, Deut. xviii. 15-19, and represented him by exalting a brazen serpent in the wilderness, so that when those who were bitten looked upon it lived. Num. xxi. 8, 9. He was also prefigured by a rod which brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms in one night, Num. xvii. 8 ; and through many other sacerdotal offices and ceremonies representing the grace, love, power, and glory of the coming prophet and king.

W. S. Father, it appears to me that the people of Israel were very ungrateful towards God for his favours and mercies.

S. C. The heathens excelled them in evincing more gratitude for past favours than the people of Israel. Bacchus, having planted vineyards in Greece, was honoured with an annual festival. And so many others among the Greeks were immortalized. Dardanus, the first king of Troy, Erichthonius, the inventor of the chariot, Persebus, Cadmus, Amphion, Minos, &c. But how different was it with the children of Israel ; how soon had they forgotten the only God.

W. S. Father, be pleased further to tell me how this people came into the land of Canaan.

S. C. After all these many miracles, and the time of Moses having transpired, and when the time drew near that God would fulfil his promises, Joshua, the son of Nun, a valiant prince, was placed in his stead. Num. xxvii. 18. And when Moses had seen all the land from the top of mount Pisgah, he died in the 120th year of his age, Deut. xxxiv. 7; yet his eye was not dim, nor had his natural force abated. And then Joshua crossed the Jordan, not less miraculously than Moses did the Red Sea. Josh. iii. and iv. And when the kings of the Canaanites heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan, their hearts melted, neither had they any more courage. Josh. v. 1. The kings were astonished; cities were closed; the tradesmen knew not what to do; the farmer despaired to follow his plough; every one was afraid of what was impending, and the more so, because he did not even dare ride abroad and speak with his neighbour; otherwise their difficulties would not have been so great, but now all their hopes were blasted.

W. S. I desire to hear the end of this history.

S. C. Do you see a high wall or tower at some distance south of us?

W. S. I do.

S. C. That was the first place which Joshua took possession of, called Jericho, at that time a fine and lively place; but it was wholly devastated, Josh. vi., and rebuilt a few centuries afterwards, and was destroyed during the late war in my lifetime, which happened about fifty years ago. Joshua triumphantly took possession of one city after another, and slew many kings. At that time king Adonizedech, apprized that Gibeon, which was upon the mountain due north of us, had made peace, entered into a confederacy with four kings, and fought against that city; but Joshua conquered him, and hanged him and his allies upon a tree. Besides these, he conquered twenty-six other kings; but all this was not done without many wonders; for the walls fell down, the sun and moon stood still at midday, so that those residing in the far west were astonished at the long morning; and those in the east were astonished at the long noon. This caused a general excitement, for such a thing had never happened before, and none knew the cause thereof but Joshua and his men. When this prince had conquered nearly all the country, except a few fortified cities, among which was Jerusalem, he divided the land, by lot, among the twelve tribes of Israel, and appointed each his inheritance; fulfilling the promise of God to the seed of Abraham. Josh. xiii.

W. S. Had the children of Israel rest after this?

S. C. Alas, they had not ; for the residue of the gentiles, which they had not wholly destroyed, troubled them considerably after the death of Joshua. They forsook God themselves and conformed to heathen customs, committed idolatry and all manner of abominations ; especially did they worship Baal and Ashtaroth, two heathen idols. Judg. ii. 12, 13.

W. S. What an abominable apostacy. But how did they thus apostatize ?

S. C. Man will readily turn from that which is invisible to that which is visible. The Assyrians had, at one time, a king called Jupiter Belus ; he was prosperous in his kingdom, and on that account was deified and canonized. After he died, an image was erected to his honour, and one of the most splendid stars in the heavens was assigned to him, which is called Jupiter in honour of him. There was also a prosperous and wise king of Greece called Jupiter ; his father was Saturn, and his brothers were called Pluto and Neptune. These were all deified after their death, but especially Jupiter, called Belus by the Assyrians, that is to say, a *ruling lord*. Thus Venus is called goddess of pleasure, called Asteroth by the Sidonians, and honoured of them and the surrounding nations as a goddess, and the most splendid

of the evening stars was called after Venus; thus also is the star Rephan honoured and esteemed sacred to Saturn.

W. S. I remember that Noah told me something respecting the beginning of idolatry; and especially did he tell me of Belus Jupiter, to whom they erected images, which caused him a great deal of trouble lest idolatry might be the consequence; and thus it has come to pass to be the case. However, I am astonished that Israel should follow those heathen idols, when they had seen so many miracles wrought by God.

S. C. You would not be astonished were you acquainted with all the circumstances; for the law of God, given by Moses, commands that we crucify the sinful lusts of the flesh; but in serving their idols, they had full liberty to indulge in sensualities, and whatever pleased the eye. They might revel in pleasure, for their altars and places of worship were in pleasant groves. The worshipping of their idols was a kind of musical jubilee; drums, trumpets, bells, harps, and the like instruments were played; singing and dancing, eating and drinking, whoring, and all manner of unchastity, were the accompanying exercises. Every one followed the desires of his own heart; for they sought no other happiness than to revel in sinful pleasures. They were allowed full indulgence to enjoy themselves; and this was like

a syren lure to the people of Israel, to lead them from the only true and living God. But, alas! they were not so spiritually minded as not to serve Baal and Ashtaroth with all their hearts.

W. S. Father, you have satisfied me in this ; but how was it with the people of Israel, did they all apostatize ?

S. C. The Lord punished them through the heathens, who made them labour severely, so that their life was a burden to them ; but when they called on him he sent them a Saviour, who redeemed, protected, and governed them according to the law of Moses ; they were governed by twelve judges for the space of four hundred years. These judges waged many wars against the heathens and subdued them ; and took Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and burnt it wholly, except the chief city on the mount. Othniel, Caleb's son-in-law, took upon him the government, and exterminated the giants in Hebron. Ehud conquered the Moabites, Judg. iii. 6-16 ; Barak the Canaanites, Gideon the Midianites, Jeptha the Ammonites, Samson the Philistines ; and thus Israel was frequently aided in their distress, and there always remained so much knowledge among them, that, through the law of promises, the true worship of God was preserved. But were I to relate all the wonders that happened during the reign of the judges—how they did

succeed in putting down their enemies— with comparatively small forces they conquered hosts, time would fail me; for neither the renowned Hercules, nor Hector, nor Ajax, nor Agamemnon, nor Ulysses, nor Menelaus; no, not one of the Grecian heroes who gained great honour in the Trojan* war, which took place about this time, cannot be compared with any of the aforesaid judges. Afterwards they were governed forty years by Eli the priest, but not without fear of being destroyed as a people, for the Philistines had possession of all the harbours of the sea and the fertile countries. Adjacent to them is Phenicia, with the two principal commercial cities Tyre and Sidon. These troubled the children of Israel considerably, committing depredations on their borders, robbed their inhabitants, they invaded and conquered them, and took the ark of God with great shoutings, 1 Sam. iv. 4–11: but this profited them little, for their fish idol Dagon† toppled upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold, 1 Sam. v. 4: their priests were smote with emerods in their secret parts; there was, besides, among the citizens a great lamenta-

* Troy was taken after a siege of ten years, 1184 years before Christ.—*Trans.*

† Dagon is commonly figured as a man in his upper parts, with the tail of a fish.—*Trans.*

tion and sore distress by day and by night, that they gladly returned the ark of the Lord to the Israelites, that it might be brought to its own place. After this event Samuel, a pious person and a prophet of the Lord, conducted the affairs of the nation until it was changed into a kingdom, 1 Sam. vii. 10, for the chief and princes of Israel desired a king of God, thinking that they would be a more permanent people if they had a king; whereupon Saul, a tall person, was made the first king of Israel. This happened about 450 years after they departed from Egypt. About this time Cillis was king of Assyria, Codrus of Athens, about 100 years after Troy was laid waste by the Grecians, and when the Latium kingdom was commenced by Eneas. About this time the kingdoms of Lacedemonia and Corinth began.

W. S. Was not the kingdom of Israel at that time in a prosperous condition?

S. C. By no means. True, this king did introduce some order, and did conquer some heathens, but he did not fully liberate Israel and restore them peace, for he was not in possession of the true royal court, namely, this city which he could not obtain from the Jebusites, therefore he was obliged to reside in Gibeon, which is called to this day Gibea Saul, which was then a splendid city, but at present, nothing but the ruins thereof to be seen. Furthermore, he was not obedient to

the Lord, but was proud, therefore God rejected him. 1 Sam. xv. 11. But the chosen of the Lord, the shepherd of Israel, born of the tribe of Judah, to whom pertained the sceptre, he was a true figure of the anointed.

W. S. You have a knowledge of some great mysteries, for your profound thoughts on this subject show it.

S. C. Oh, son ! I scarcely know of which shepherd to speak, for two occupy my mind at present; but to follow the order of history, to assist your understanding, I will proceed with the first.

W. S. I will listen attentively.

S. C. The one whom I first mentioned was called David, a promising youth, friendly and piously disposed, but little esteemed in his father's house. Chosen of God, he kept his father's sheep, 1 Sam. xvi. 11, and was solemnly anointed as king of Israel by Samuel, 1 Sam. xvi. 13, and afterwards slew a giant, depending more on faith than in reliance upon his own strength and weapons of war. 1 Sam. xvii. 50, 51. He gained the good will of the people, so that while Saul yet lived, the kingdom was assigned him ; however, he did not obtain it after suffering much tribulation and adversity. When Saul was slain in his battle against the Philistines, David erected his throne at Hebron ; but after having been king seven years, 2 Sam. ii. 11, and having the command of all the forces of

Israel, he besieged the city of Jebus. 2 Sam. v. 6. The Jebusites relied upon their own well-fortified city, and mocked David by placing the blind and lame of the city upon the walls; for they had not been conquered for five hundred years. They had a strong fortified castle upon this mountain, which they considered impossible to be stormed, and a little lower down, upon mount Akron, was the suburb. After David had taken possession of the suburb, he then stormed yonder town, where you see the remains of its walls; he entered the chief city and exterminated the Jebusites. So he dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. He enlarged and highly improved it, and it became the king's palace, and was renowned as a famous city in every land.

W. S. But what is that towards the east from us? I see a great many remains of a dilapidated wall—blue and white stones, pillars of marble, some appear to be gilt, and although there is much grass and moss grown among those stones, still it is evident that there were many splendid houses in times past.

S. C. I know not what you mean, that you bring such things to mind as are calculated to grieve me; do you think my heart is made of diamond, and my mind of steel, because you ask me such questions? If I had not seen these buildings in their most flourish

ing condition, then it would not affect me so much. You well may ask whence all those heaps of stone, among which are some valuable stones of various figures and sizes, some highly ornamented; yea, there are many of the streets filled with ruins; and were I to give you an account of every thing in relation to them, it would make a whole book to notice them all; but, as we have assembled for this purpose, the question is not an improper one, but too mature, for we are engaged in the narration of what first befell this city; for she experienced sad and unfortunate vicissitudes before her final destruction.

W. S. Father, be not displeased with me; when I often bluntly ask concerning things, you must ascribe it to my inexperience. I, who have come from a great distance, know not what has taken place in days that are past, and it is by asking that I am to be informed. Be pleased, therefore, to tell me something more concerning David the king.

S. C. This king did not only adorn and improve the city with splendid houses, subdue the surrounding countries, and restore the true worship of God to its primitive purity, but also composed psalms, and prophesied of an eternal kingdom, which God would perpetuate from the kingdom and tribe of Judah, which God promised unto Abraham nine hundred years previously, that in

his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Now this highly favoured king, after having reigned forty years, died and was buried in the city of David, and his kingdom was greatly established. 1 Kings ii. 10, 11.

W. S. Who succeeded David in the kingdom?

S. C. He was a wise and prudent son; there was none to be compared unto him.

W. S. What was his name?

S. C. Solomon, which perfectly agrees with his disposition, 2 Chron. i. 2; for he reigned forty years without having any war. His was truly the golden age; and the kingdom of Israel never was in such a prosperous condition as at that time. He commanded respect, on account of his wisdom, among all the kings and potentates. He solved many difficult things. He was skilled in all the arts and sciences. His knowledge of architecture, agriculture, and horticulture was extensive. In his economical arrangements, for order and perfection, none exceeded him. There were no protracted controversies before him; for he always brought them to an immediate and satisfactory issue by his wisdom. In short, he was the flower of all the kings of the earth, and an ornament to Israel; and in addition to all this, he made Jerusalem the dwelling place of holiness, and a queen of all the earth. In the city, on Mount Moriah,

where are many ancient remains, he built one of the most splendid temples* that ever was erected ; adorned and ornamented the marble stones of which it was composed with gold and silver, shining in splendour like the majestic sun. One hundred and eighty thousand workmen were employed in this structure for seven years and a half. All manner of carved work, linens of various colours covered the sanctum sanctorum, the holy of holies. In it were the altar for burning incense and the ark of the covenant. There was no city but the city of Jerusalem where the Almighty was to be thus publicly worshipped. 2 Kings vi. O son, how blessed, how singularly and distinguishedly blessed, is a people among whom God has his name, and over whom rules such a wise king as Solomon. He also built a palace for himself, the magnificence and splendour of which was beyond expression ; he also built another for his Egyptian queen, and a royal country palace for his summer residence, which he called the house of the forest of Lebanon. Princes and queens brought him presents from afar, for his fame was spoken of in all the world, and the greatest men of the age were ambitious to see him and to hear his wisdom. His

* Solomon laid the foundation of the temple in the fourth year of his reign and second month, in the year after the creation 2992, and the 480th of the Israelites' exit out of Egypt; and about one thousand years before the birth of the Messiah.—*Trans.*

yearly revenue, exclusive of taxes, was immensely great; the enormous sum of forty tons of gold annually.* Silver was as plenty as stones in Jerusalem. His wisdom and learning exceeded all the learning and wisdom of the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Tyrians, and other renowned nations; so that there was none to be compared with him in all the world. O, how Jerusalem flourished then! Three times a year all Israel assembled in Jerusalem: the number of them was no less than one million. Pause a moment and consider the vast concourse, the great number of different artificers, merchants, the nobility and princes, priests and scribes; the many splendid houses, the pleasure gardens, with which the city was adorned; and, behold! what is its present condition? a heap of ruins, and a desolate place! Especially when we reflect on the great sufferings and distress it had to experience. This all is a lamentable history of facts.

W. S. Father, before you become too pensive, be pleased to tell me more concerning the kingdom of Israel.

S. C. When this blessed king was dead, his son succeeded him and ascended the throne; but he was unlike his father; for he

* His annual revenue amounted to 666 talents of gold, besides the tribute of kings and nations subject to him, the customs of the merchandise, and the rich presents sent him from all quarters; so that he had gold and silver in such abundance that it was accounted as stones.—*Trans.*

destroyed and wasted more through his folly than his father had saved by his wisdom. 1 Kings xii.

W. S. That was lamentable ! But what was the consequence ?

S. C. The kingdom, which was united before during the three preceding kings' reign, was now divided. Two of the tribes, Judah and Benjamin, adhered to the son of Solomon, called Rehoboam ; the other ten tribes made choice of Jeroboam as their king. This was only a minor evil, for them to be divided ; but a greater one befell them, through which the greatness of Israel was wholly destroyed.

W. S. That was, indeed, to be much regretted.

S. C. I cannot relate it to you without much sorrow ; however, I will tell you all about it. Jeroboam was apprehensive that if the nation was obliged to come thrice in a year to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice, that they might go back to their allegiance to the house of David ; therefore, he made two calves of gold, and set up one in Bethel, in the southern, and another at Dan, in the northern part of his dominions ; for he knew how they were alienated from God in former days by idols, and he succeeded ; for from that time oxen, calves, and sheep were seen daily driving to the new altars, to be offered thereon.

W. S. How is it possible that they could have been so very ignorant ?

S. C. To them it did not appear idolatry ; for he made the calves, as he said, to the honour of God, who had led Israel out of Egypt, alleging that God is not confined to any particular place, and that He may be worshipped as acceptably at Bethel, before the calf, as at Jerusalem, in the Temple.

W. S. This appeared to be plausible reasoning.

S. C. If this had not been somewhat plausible, how could the people have been seduced to worship ! His successors practised the same abominable idolatry. Nadab his son, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Amri, and Ahab walked in the same wicked course. They did not only encourage Israel in this idolatry, but also introduced the worship of Baal Jupiter.* Then God sent the prophet Elijah, with signs and wonders, to this people ; and he said unto them, “ As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these three years ; ” and there was no rain in that land for three years and six months. 1 Kings xvii. 1. The misery which was then in that land cannot be described ; the earth was parched, the grain of the fields was all burnt up, and the water of

* Ahab was a great idolater. The Scripture says, “ that he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.” He married Jezebel, a daughter of Ethbaal, the heathen king of the Zidonians ; and with her he introduced the Zidonian idol-worship of Baal, and built a temple to him in Samaria ; and made a grove for the practice of his wicked abominations.—*Trans.*

the rivers was dried up, and wherever eye could be cast there were parched fields ; cattle lowing for water, but there was none, for the famine was throughout the land ; nay, even the king's horses could scarce any longer survive. Although clouds seemed to gather, they were soon dissipated by the scorching rays of the sun. How often did they wish for refreshing showers, but all was in vain ; the heavens were as brass, and the earth as iron. Ultimately, God had compassion upon the land of his strayed flocks, who were seduced and led astray by false shepherds. There is a fertile mountain, near the sea, north of us, called Carmel, more than a day's journey from Jerusalem. It was upon that mountain that Elijah assembled the priests of Baal in the presence of the king and all Israel, and showed unto them by the falling of fire from heaven that the Lord is God alone. 1 Kings xviii. 19-39. When the people saw this and believed, God sent rain, in answer to the petition of Elijah. God, as it were, unlocked the heavens, and the rain descended, to the joy of all Israel, and the vineyards and fields assumed a beautiful verdure, and stood dressed in vivid green. This divine prophet was afterwards much persecuted by king Ahab, until he ascended up into heaven in a fiery chariot ; leaving behind him a disciple called Elisha, who fed the flock of Israel on green pastures for the

space of seventy years. He did many signs and wonders ; raised the dead, cured the leprous, fed the hungry in a miraculous manner, relieved the distressed, instructed the ignorant, and prophesied of future events. He survived six kings in Israel ; namely, Ahab, Ahazias, Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash, who all reigned consecutively ; and he died lamented by all Israel, for he was their comfort in those distressing seasons. 2 Kings xiii.

W. S. You are telling me wonders ! But, tell me, did the revolted Israelites reform ? did they renounce their idolatry, and again return to the house of David ; because you say, that through a miracle wrought by Elijah, they believed ?

S. C. Why should they reform ? The common people were not their own masters ; and if they even did regard what the true prophets said,—for there were still a few who warned them faithfully, such as Hosea, Amos, Joel, Abdias, and a few others,—their ungodly kings, who wielded the sceptre, compelled them to offer unto the idols ; besides, the craftiness of the false prophets was employed to represent things to the mind in such a manner that their understandings were benighted and perverted, and diverted from divine truths.

W. S. Thus I perceive, that this people was always governed by ungodly kings.

S. C. Always: from the first to the very last did these kings increase in wickedness; for from the time of the aforesaid king Joash, who reigned in the days of Elisha, one Jeroboam succeeded another; and after them, some tyrants laid the land waste, and destroyed each other as ravens. Shallum put Zacharias to death, 2 Kings xiv. 16-23, and Shallum was slain by Menahem; and Pekah slew him and reigned in his stead. Afterwards Hoshea made a conspiracy against Pekah, and smote him, and reigned in his stead, until God put an end to all these abominations through Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, who was powerful and mighty upon the earth; for when Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser's father, was dead, he invaded this country, subdued Samaria, and obliged Hoshea to pay an annual tribute. And when Hoshea designed to cast off the yoke, with the assistance of the king of Egypt, Shalmaneser invaded him again with a powerful army, pillaged the country where he came, seized upon the golden calf at Bethel, laid siege to Samaria, which he took at the end of three years, made Hoshea prisoner, put him in chains, and imprisoned him for life. Thus the kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel was ended, after having been a nation from the truce of Solomon, for the space of 253 years; and thus were carried away captives, and dispersed through Media and Assyria; and

there they were convinced of the just judgments of God for sinning against heaven and against Him.

W. S. O, what great changes! what vicissitudes!

S. C. Similar vicissitudes or revolutions took place about the same time* in Italy; for Amulius, king of Albia, was put to death by Romulus and Remus, his friends, and they formed the city of Rome, which is now the chief city of all the world, whose kingdom is governed at present by the mighty and invincible emperor Trajan, whose ancestors—

W. S. Father, I am afraid you are too much wearied.

S. C. O, the sorrowful histories crowd in upon me on every hand!

W. S. You were speaking of Trajan.

S. C. Whose ancestors, said I, polluted themselves with blood; and he is not free from it, although he is renowned: but what shall I speak of him, when I have such a wide field open before me? I would also desire to tell you something concerning the Greek Olympian games, and of the kingdom of Macedonia; but why should I concern myself with Gentile history? I have enough with the city of Jerusalem, of what befell

* The kingdom of Israel was ended by the taking of Samaria, by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, about seven hundred and twenty-one years before Christ.—*Trans.*

her, and I have digressed from the chronological order of history, to tell the history of Jerusalem and the history of the Jews till the present time.

W. S. That is true, and I am desirous to hear the end of that history.

S. C. Did I not tell you how Rehoboam the son of Solomon, reigned after the death of his father?

W. S. Father, you have told me.

S. C. Inasmuch as he and the princes of Judah fell from the Lord,* the Lord made bare his arm, for, behold, the Lord raised up Shishak, king of Egypt, to invade him with a numerous army, who ravaged his country took his fortified towns, entered Jerusalem without opposition, and plundered the temple and the royal treasury; for the king's heart had failed him when he saw this great army, and he humbled himself before God, and confessed that this was his justly merited punishment. When God perceived this, he did not wholly exterminate them, but permitted their treasures, upon which they depended, to be taken. The citizens were dejected in mind, the priests sighed, the princes were astonished, and thought

* For three years he kept up the true worship of God at Jerusalem. When thinking himself secure and settled in the kingdom, he pulled off the mask, and being joined by his subjects in idolatry, they set up images and groves upon every hill and under every green tree, where they committed the detestable sin of Sodom, and all the wickedness for which the Canaanites had been expelled.—*Trans.*

upon the flourishing times they had during Solomon's reign ; they wept when they saw foreign nations, the Egyptians, the Ethiopians, and Arabians, carry off the holy vessels, the money, the treasures, their golden shields, and many other precious and rare articles. Thus might they well say, that wisdom is more preferable than folly and ignorance, even as light is preferable to darkness ; and that king Solomon had much reason to be solicitous, when he saw, from the course of the people, that this would be the consequence—that the works of his hands, curiously made, were to pass into the hands of others. When Rehoboam had reigned seventeen years, his son Abijah succeeded him in the kingdom, and having reigned three years, he was succeeded by Asa, who reigned forty years. 2 Chron. xii. xiii. xvi. He lived about ten years in peace, and then the country was invaded by Zeroh, king of Cash, of Ethiopia.* This invasion was designed utterly to extirpate the name of Judah, for Zeroh came upon him with an army of 1,000,000 men and 300 armed chariots ; but he and his whole army were routed, put to flight, and many were slain. Asa and his people returned to Jerusalem in triumph, and the country had peace for a

* This was not Ethiopia properly so called ; it was that point of Arabia Petrea of the east shore of the Red Sea, which inclines towards Egypt and Judea.—*Trans.*

season. On the demise of Asa, his son Jehoshaphat succeeded him. 2 Chron. xx. He was a pious man. Jehoshaphat was considerably harassed by the neighbouring kings, and all Jerusalem was in exceeding great alarm; but when they took their refuge in God they were saved. He exhorted them as a father would his children—he led them as a shepherd, and ruled them as a king; but when his son Jehoram succeeded him, the country was soon involved again in misery and wretchedness. He was a very degenerate son, and became worse by marrying Ahab's daughter, whose wickedness he imitated; for when his father was dead, he put to death his six brethren and many of the nobles, and advanced idolatry as much as he could. The country was again pillaged by the Philistines and Arabians—the city did not escape their ravages. He and his wife and children, and many others, were taken and led into captivity. He died of a loathsome and lingering disease, of which his bowels fell out, for he rejected the admonition he received of Elyoh by letter. His son Ahaziah, who succeeded him, was exceedingly wicked; therefore, was he and his family destroyed by Jehu. 2 Chron. xxii.

W. S. O, how this people was afflicted, and what strange things happened to this city!

S. C. O, my son, you have only heard the

beginning. What you have heard is not to be compared with what you will yet hear, for the crimes of the city were still of a more heinous and abominable character, and the consequent punishment proportionate; for the ungodly queen, Athalia, the mother of Ahaziah, when her son was dead, arose, and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah. 2 Chron. xxii. 10. The weeping and lamentation was great. Mothers, seeing their infant children murdered, their hearts failed them. The bloodthirsty war dogs-hunted them down every where in the city; they had no regard for any. The whole royal family was slain, except Joash, the son of Ahaziah, who was taken by Jehosheba, the king's daughter, and he and his nurse were hid in a bedchamber. 2 Chron. xxii. 11. Athalia reigned seven years; but when Joash had been six years of age, being from his youth under the tutelary care of Jehoida, the high-priest, who had seen all the abomination, he was anointed and proclaimed king of Judah by the sound of trumpets; and the queen, who made some resistance, was brought forth by the command of the high-priest, and slain at the stable gate belonging to the palace; and thus was she rewarded by the effusion of her own blood. 2 Chron. xxiii. 15. But, lamentable to think on! this king reigned well only as long as this respectable old man lived. 2 Chron. xxiv.

Jehoiada survived eight kings of Judah, namely, Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Josaphat, Jehoram, Ahazias, and the queen Athaliah. What he had to endure is not easily imagined, much less to be described I feel for every aged person who has to spend his time this way. Jehoiada governed the minority of the young prince ; but this holy man dying in the 130th year of his age, then the floods of iniquity and abomination were let loose ; Joash left the service of the temple and worshipped idols. Being reproved by Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada, he most impiously and ungratefully ordered a band of ruffians to kill him, who, setting upon him in one of the courts of the temple, stoned him to death, while he called upon God to avenge his cause ; and his blood indeed was required in those last days of this generation, as the ruined walls of the city, the waste streets, the mouldering palaces, which you see on yonder mountain, amply testify.

W. S. O, the impious kings !

S. C. His son Amaziah, who succeeded him, was not much better. Elated with his successful wars against the Edomites, he reproached the prophets, challenged Joash, the king of Israel ; and he came with his whole army, entered victoriously into Jerusalem, plundered the temple and palace, and broke down the walls of the city, from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, making an open-

ing of at least forty yards, so that the city would not rebel any more against him. But the wall was rebuilt by Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi., who succeeded his father. He was a great king ; for God prospered him in all his undertakings. He made many nations tributary;* but when he had become powerful and prosperous, he opposed the priests ; by ambition to unite in himself the two sacred characters of prince and prophet, he was for sacrificing and serving in holy things himself ; but God showed him by a sign, that his conduct did not please him, for he was smitten with leprosy, and remained leprous till he died, in the 68th year of his age, and left a son called Jotham, who was pious, and reigned well for sixteen years. 2 Chron. xxvii.

W. S. Thus I perceive that they had some prosperous times after Jerusalem had been in its first flourishing condition.

S. C. The reign of the two above-named kings continued for the space of seventy years, during which time every one might sit beneath his own vine and fig-tree, none dared to make him afraid ; the cities were

* He beat the Philistines in many battles, dismantled their fortified towns, and built cities on their frontiers, and thereby kept them in subjection. He subdued the Arabians that bordered on Egypt, and the Mehurians that lived in the deserts, and brought the Ammonites under tribute. He repaired the walls of Jerusalem, fortified them with towers, and erected engines thereon for throwing darts, arrows, and great stones, to annoy the enemy.—*Trans.*

improved, the fields were sown, the merchant became wealthy, the mechanic had every thing in abundance, all were at perfect liberty to go whither they pleased, every thing was in a prosperous state. As you see it is in a fertile and beautiful country ; the trees are deprived of their foliage but for a short time, the winter being but of short durance ; the rays of the sun, because he does not retrograde far from the north, moderate the cold ; although it is rather warm in the summer, yet it is pleasant during the greater part of the year ; a land, indeed, when there is peace, that floweth with milk and honey. Besides, the divine service was a pleasing and holy exercise, for king David and Solomon were happily calculated to make every thing attractive, for they had introduced the finest music in the world, they had many sweet singers and stringed instruments, making a heavenly melody. I saw the remains of the temple, and am persuaded that it was splendid, and it must have been superlatively so in the days of Solomon.

W. S. O, what prosperous times then !

S. C. But very short and uncertain ; for all their joys were changed into sorrow, for the aforementioned son of Jotham, Ahaz, blasted all their hopes.

W. S. How, father ?

S. C. Do you see a valley between us and the mountain south of us ?

W. S. I do.

S. C. In that valley* Ahaz set up a large brass image, called Baal Jupiter, or Moloch, under which he built a great fire and heated the image intensely. On both sides of it were two strong walls. Thither resorted the deluded parents with their families, deceived by their wicked priests, and made their children pass through the fire, offered them up to Moloch into his arms, and thus they were burnt up. The lamentation and crying of those children is more readily imagined than to be described. In order to prevent the parents from being compassionately affected by the cries of their children, drums were beaten, and they played upon all manner of musical instruments; hence the valley is called Tophet, the vale of music, or Gehenna, that valley of murder, on account of the murders committed there. This was an abominable delusion, contrary to all nature and the law of God, who desires not the death of any one, but the happiness of all, and is always better pleased to see men happy and cheerful, than to see human immolations. Although he demanded Abraham to sacrifice his son, it was not his desire that Isaac should die; he was only testing Abraham's faith. King Ahaz was a great idolater, and made Judah imitate the Israel-

* Valley of Hinnom.—*Trant.*

ites, the Ammonites, and other heathen nations in their abominable idolatry.

W. S. But were they also punished ?

S. C. Certainly. Not only did the Assyrian king cause the people of Jerusalem to be sore afraid on account of his great and powerful army besieging the city, but Pekah, the king of Israel, marched against Ahaz, and gave him a terrible overthrow, carried off vast spoils, and above 200,000 captives, men and women, which was terrible to behold. The Edomites and Philistines also ransacked and pillaged the country ; whereupon Ahaz took the treasures, sent them with an embassy to Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria, and made a league with him ; and thus you see they were troubled on all sides, and after committing many other abominations he died.

W. S. O, the distressing times, when all true knowledge of God was lost !

S. C. Greece seemed to be more prosperous now than this miserable people, for Homer had enlightened them by his poems and other useful instruction ; and Hesiod's verses on tablets, and his moral code, his compositions called *The Works and the Days*, gave the Greeks some ideas of the Creator ; but among the Jews all virtue and knowledge were lost ; they departed from virtue's path. But God did not give them over altogether, he glorified and magnified his name. He

raised two bright lights in Israel ; the one was the prophet Isaiah, who prophesied good tidings to Ahaz, saying, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, that is God with us.” Holy and glorious name!—and I lived to see this child.

W. S. Father, I see you are weeping. I am sorry that I trouble you so much, I wish I understood you better ; the many thoughts occurring to you trouble you so that you falter.

S. C. I said that I lived to see the promised personage, the glorious Son ; but you are not able to comprehend the matter. This prophet’s predictions are so plain, that you would suppose he had seen the things before. I and my cotemporaries know it to be true ; but more of this hereafter.

W. S. Who is the other light ?

S. C. It was the son of Ahaz, called Hezekiah, a man filled with the fear of God, 2 Chron. xxix. 1, who showed himself as a father and shepherd of Israel, to bring in the scattered sheep. He sent messengers to the Israelites, whom Smalansar had led away captive. He prepared a general passover at Jerusalem, and invited them all. 2 Chron. xxx. 1. He made clean the house of the Lord of the abominations of his ancestors, cut down the groves, destroyed all the idols, and as ungodly as his father was, so dis-

tinguished was he for piety : he was a great consolation to all the people ; it appeared as though the sun had risen once more. 2 Chron. xxxii.

W. S. That was great consolation to their sore distress.

S. C. There was great rejoicing on that account throughout all the land ; but what did it avail ? for their rejoicing was soon followed by sorrowful seasons ; for scarce had this king reigned fourteen years, till the Assyrian army invaded them, and covered the land as grasshoppers ; they besieged the fortified cities, and conquered all before them. Their king presumed to do unto Jerusalem as his father did to Samaria ten years before that ; he sent them letters, threatening that if they would not surrender the city, he would not be prevailed upon, neither by gifts nor presents—his heroes stood as lions before the wall, brandishing their shields and swords, and displaying the conquering forces of their great king.

W. S. This must have caused the pious Hezekiah much fear.

S. C. It is not to be expressed. He collected his people as a father would his children, he sighed unto God, and spread the letter before the Lord. 2 Kings xix. 14. Tears were his weapons, prayer his shield, and the prophet Isaiah his ambassador at heaven's court, whence held was promised, and relief

sent in a short time, to the astonishment and joy of all the people.

W. S. Did an army come to his assistance?

S. C. Nothing less than a prince from heaven with a fiery sword.

W. S. Father, you are telling me wonders!

S. C. Weeping and wailing commenced in the Assyrian camp; some were dying while sitting at meals, some fell down in full armour, the sentinels sunk under their own pikes; terror prevailed in the tents, so that none dared to stir, for many of the boisterous soldiery died suddenly. Some, in attempting to assist their dying companions, fell down dead before they could reach them; the noble and the princes, who shortly before were healthy and in full vigour, trembled, and before a physician could be procured, death's pallid die was cast; and what was still more alarming, none could bring the sad intelligence to the king. He was ignorant of their wretched condition, for whoever attempted to approach them from without fell down dead instantly, as if he were shot with a fiery dart, so that when the haughty king awoke in the morning with a few remaining, they were exceedingly sorrowful, for whither soever they turned their eyes they beheld the field covered over with dead. Neither did they hear the beating of the drum, nor

the sound of the trumpet, nor the cry of war: they never witnessed such a terrible slaughter. When they called at any of the tents, no reply was heard other than a call from an expiring one for help; there was none to comfort; so they retreated with a few remaining ones, and thus in one single night no less than 180,000 were slain. And when the king returned home, his idols could impart him no consolation, nor protect him; for in the very act of worshipping in the temple his god Nisroch, his own sons, Adramelech and Sharezer, slew him.

W. S. O, the great defeat, so much to the advantage of the citizens! The soldiers would probably have plundered their city.

S. C. Their drooping hearts could exhilarate themselves with the wine that was left. The silk sashes, costly raiment, golden and silver vessels, chains, rings, and every thing that was left in the forsaken camp, were taken as reprisals. This victory confirmed the pious of Jerusalem, and drew forth from Hezekiah, and other pious persons, the warmest feelings of thanksgiving and praise to God for this great unheard-of deliverance.

W. S. It appears that the kingdom of Judah retrieved itself. Was it not restored to some degree of prosperity?

S. C. It appeared so for a short time, but soon the reverse followed. When this pious king died, after reigning twenty-nine years,

his son succeeded him, and followed his grandfather's wicked and abominable course ; nay, he was even guilty of grosser idolatry than he. 2 Chron. xxxiii.

W. S. This grieves me sorely.

S. C. And I am not much less grieved. Although it is painful for me to tell you the history, yet I will have to give you a brief statement thereof, so that you will not be so much surprised when I tell you of the destruction of Jerusalem. This son, called Manasseh, was a heedless young man, and suffered himself to be deceived of false prophets, so that he restored idolatry and departed from the living God. He worshipped the sun, moon, and stars ; he made his son pass through the fire, he used enchantments, he encouraged soothsayers and all manner of enchantings. He was so completely absorbed in these things that he lost all affection for his children, preferring them to be sacrificed to Moloch rather than to be instructed in the ordinances of the house of the Lord.

W. S. What folly ! what perversity !

S. C. Besides that, he filled Jerusalem with blood, he had Isaiah the prophet sawed asunder, because he reproved him of his abomination. Isaiah was a great comfort to the house of Israel for the space of ninety years.

W. S. O, the barbarous cruelty !

S. C. The pious were daily harassed, per-

secuted and murdered, only because they bore testimony to the truth, and would not worship the idols of the king. Their blood flowed as water in the streets, for this king exceeded all other tyrants for cruelty : he was more like a bloodthirsty wolf than a reigning prince. None escaped his vengeance, so that he at last provoked the wrath of God upon the whole city, and God determined to inflict severe punishments upon him.

W. S. It appears to me that this king was more cruel and wicked than the heathens.

S. C. Yes, he was worse, for it appeared as though all light and probity had departed and taken up their abode among the heathen. For Lycurgus shone as a bright luminary about this time among the Lacedemonians, like Numa Pompilius among the Romans ; besides, philosophy began to flourish in Greece, through such men as Thales, Periander, Cleobulus, Pittacus, Solon, Chilo, Bias, Archilogus, and the like enlightened men. This city, which God had chosen as the place where his name should be established, was as a desolate place, as a widow forsaken : and this was all occasioned by those who had command of the regiments.

W. S. Father, be pleased to tell me whether this king was not punished ?

S. C. He was punished, for he fell into the hands of Merodach Baladan, who bound him with chains, and led him captive to Babylon,

where through much weeping, wailing, sighing, and humbling himself before God, his kingdom was restored to him, and he then wrought a great reformation. He took away the strange gods and the idols out of the house of the Lord, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, commanding Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11-8. And after reigning fifty-five years, he left the kingdom to his son Amon. After a two years' ungodly reign, he was slain by his own servants, and left a son called Josiah, who began to reign at eight years of age. At sixteen he sought after God, and at twenty he destroyed the altar and idols which his father Amon, the son of Manasseh, set up. 2 Kings xxiii. 3, 4. 2 Chron. xxiv. 1-7. 2 Chron. xxxiv.

W. S. What remarkable changes and vicissitudes this kingdom was subjected to.

S. C. This kingdom was like a faint variegated animal of divers colours. But I will proceed to tell you of the virtuous king Josiah. 2 Kings i. 22, 23. As he was engaged in repairing the temple and restoring the worship of God, he found the book of the law of the Lord. He rent his clothes, and mourned to think how little this law had been observed, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 15; and when it had been read to the king and the people, then they began to demolish all the idols, broke down the altars of Baalim, cut down the groves; the houses of debauchery all around

Jerusalem were demolished ; the wagon, the sun and moon, held sacred to Apollo and Diana, were ground to dust ; the worshipping of Jupiter and other planets, was abolished ; and in other cities the altars were all destroyed, also the golden calf made in honour of Jeroboam. The priests were wailing, for they were cut into pieces, and even as they offered unto Moloch, so were they made a sacrifice unto fire ; yes, they even burnt the bones of the priests that had been buried on the altar, as it was predicted by the prophet Ido, nearly 360 years beforehand. 1 Kings xiii. 1.

W. S. What a noble zeal !

S. C. After that he gathered together all Israel, as a shepherd would his sheep, and kept a passover to the Lord with great joy and fervid zeal ; and each made a covenant with the Lord to serve him with full purpose of heart ; but what followed ? About twelve years after this reformation, this pious king was shot with an arrow by Necho, king of Egypt, as he was going into Assyria to subdue that country. 2 Kings xxiii. 29 ; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 23. Thus was the boast of Israel and the glory of Jerusalem laid low, never more to rise.

W. S. O, what a lamentable occurrence ! How grieved must have been the pious of that day !

S. C. There was great lamentation and weeping among all. In the fields of Megid-

do, their lamentation is not to be described ; they wrung their hands, rent their clothes, and cried unto heaven. The sweet singers turned their singing into weeping, and composed lamentations. All the people were afflicted ; every one sighed ; the tears were flowing down their cheeks, as if they had lost their father. Nay, the pious and highly respected Jeremiah lamented the death of Josiah, for he knew that Jerusalem and all Judah sustained a great loss in his death.

2 Chron. xxxv. 25-35.

W. S. Thus they were sorely afflicted with tribulation.

S. C. O my son, it grieves me to tell you, I believe that none ever will live to see so much wo and misery as was brought upon this city, till it was utterly destroyed.

W. S. I am anxious to hear more.

S. C. You ought to bear in mind that there were two rival empires rising ; namely, the Egyptian and Assyrian. At one time the former had the ascendency, at another time the latter ; and both plundered Jerusalem and the whole country. And it came to pass that Jehoahaz succeeded his father Josiah in the kingdom. 2 Kings xxiii. 31. But the aforementioned Necho was again victorious, put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold, and made Eliakim, his brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed

his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz and carried him into Egypt, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 4 ; took with him into his own country a great deal of gold and silver ; but after living in peace for four years, there came a mighty king, called Nebuchadnezzer, out of Assyria, up against Necho, and conquered him at the Euphrates, and took possession of the country as far as to Pelusium. Then all the country feared greatly, for the soldiers were determined to return with some plunder. The household goods, the cattle, and the grain in the fields were made a prey ; besides, this city was also threatened with the returning of the Assyrians, who were now retiring to their own country. But had this Jehoiakim walked in the ways of his father, and in the mean time repented, God would have been his protector ; but he was worse than Phalaris, who tyrannized at this time in Agrigentum. Four years after this the Assyrians came again into this country, and compelled them to pay tribute ; this they did for three successive years, till the eleventh year of his reign.

W. S. I am astonished that this pious king Josiah had such ungodly children.

S. C. There was not one that walked in his father's ways. Jehoiakim was more wicked than all the others ; besides committing many abominations, he also shed innocent blood. The prophet Urias, who reproved

him for his wickedness, he persecuted, and followed him into Egypt, and had him brought back, and executed him with the sword. Jer. xxvi. 20-23. Jeremiah would have shared the same fate had he not made his escape; for this pious man stood up in the port of the temple and taught the multitude as they went in and out, telling them of the future calamitous judgments that would befall the city on account of their wickedness. He sighed, he sorrowed; nay, he called unto and warned them, he saw the impending judgments: all availed nothing, the false prophets comforted and flattered the people, and had the king enraged against Jeremiah, and the king took the roll (book), cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire. Jer. xxxvi. 23. Judgments were not kept back long, for in the eleventh year of his reign, when he refused to pay tribute, and depending on the king of Egypt for aid, came Nebuchadnezzar with a mighty army, and encamped before Jerusalem, and made them terribly afraid by brandishing his splendidly bright armour; and Jehoiakim being afraid opened the gates of the city; the soldiers, lion-like, entered and caused great weeping and lamentation in the city, killed whatever came in their way; some they took prisoners, especially the nobility, among whom were the prophets Daniel and Ezekiel, together with Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, and

many other young noblemen. Jehoiakim was bound with chains—he was not led away captive, but, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, was slain and dragged out as an ass, unlamented and buried without the city. Afterwards the temple was pillaged, and all the silver vessels and other precious articles were taken. And after Jehoiakim* was declared king in his father's stead, many were led away captive into a strange land, and with much sorrowing bid adieu to their own country.

W. S. This must have been heartrending.

S. C. Oh, my son, one stroke followed another. About four months after this the Assyrians came again, covering the country with soldiers and cavalry; they encamped before the city and besieged it. The young king was demanded, and he and his mother went out to meet them, with all his princes and nobles, and as they had come out they were shewn chains, which they beheld with sorrow. This was not all, but there were 10,000 of the most valuable citizens taken, such as the mechanics, and others, the very flower of the city, led into captivity, and the temple was plundered again to enrich the treasury of the Assyrian king. All these visitations and judgments were brought upon them on account of their sins; and had

* Who is also called Jeconiah and Coniah.—*Trans.*

they even reformed, they were so habituated to idolatry and the abominations of the heathens, that all the judgments of God could not have deterred them, as was fully manifested afterwards.

W. S. It is with an equal degree of both astonishment and sorrow that I am anxious to hear the end of their fate.

S. C. After this young prince was led away into captivity, his paternal uncle, Zedekiah, was made king; he was the twenty-second after Saul and the last king of Judah. In his reign it went no better than in the reign of his predecessors. The prophet Jeremiah preached unto them and reproved them of sin, and through many signs made known the awaiting destruction; but none gave heed to what he said. Nay, they mocked and laughed at him as if he were deranged, because the king, the nobility, and the priests, and many other respectable persons understood the matter differently. King Zedekiah violated his oath, being advised thereto by evil counsellors, and revolted from the king of Babylon, who then came up to Jerusalem with a mighty host and besieged the city. In the mean time the king of Egypt made ready to aid Zedekiah, upon which the Assyrian king marched off with his army to fight against the Egyptian king. Then the false prophets cried aloud—"This city shall never

be taken." Jeremiah was called a false prophet, and the king was prevailed on to cast Jeremiah into prison, but he still maintained that he was right. They struck him, they abused and mocked him, and would have fairly killed him, but God did not permit it. Jer. xxxvii. 15-21.

W. S. But please to tell me, did the king approve of all this?

S. C. He was a complete tool in the hands of the priests and princes; they dictated, and he obeyed—he was completely under their tutelage. The king of Babylon returned again, and besieged Jerusalem so closely, that neither dog nor cat could escape from the city. Then Zedekiah feared exceedingly, and sent for Jeremiah in the prison, and as he came and spoke to him the word of the Lord, advising him that he should deliver up the city, or it would be destroyed; the king called the princes and consulted them, for without their consent he did not dare do any thing, telling them that Jeremiah entreated or commanded him to surrender. He then, at the instance of the princes and priests, cast Jeremiah into a stinking dungeon, where he would have died a miserable death, had not one of the pious eunuchs, Ebed-Melech, interfered. Jer. xxxviii. 6.

W. S. O, what have the pious prophets of God not to suffer, only because they speak

the truth, and what have the common people not to endure when they have a cruel and wicked king !

S. C. This is not to be described. The famine which was then increased every day ; the poor died as flies upon the streets. The spectral and meagre skeletons showed how great the famine was—their children cried for bread, sucklings could no longer be nourished at milkless breasts, dying in the arms of their mothers. Many, for hunger's sake, did eat skins, and whatever they could get. Those who were brought up delicately, and fared sumptuously, had now no bread to eat ; others fell down. The impoverished citizens went out to resist the sentinels, who stood as bold as lions. Besides famine there was a sore pestilence in the city. In short, the citizens were reduced to the horrid necessity of eating one another. And, withal, this wretched people could not see that it was their iniquity that brought this upon them.

W. S. How long was the city besieged ?

S. C. About eighteen months.

W. S. It is a wonder that they did not give heed to Jeremiah and surrender the city in time.

S. C. They flattered themselves that the Chaldeans would march off, for their false prophets made them believe that God would protect his people, saying, “ Fear not, this is the Lord's temple, this is the place of his

offerings: God will not permit this place to be destroyed, but much more shall the golden vessels which had been carried off be restored to you, for this is the place where his name dwelleth." Jer. xxviii. 2-4. Thus they encouraged the faint-hearted citizens and thereby many were slain in battle as the Chaldeans entered the city. Those who followed the advice of Jeremiah, and surrendered, were saved; but then they were looked upon as deserters and traitors to the city, as they considered Jeremiah.

W. S. O, the subtle deception of the false prophets! Could they not be persuaded that it was of more importance to keep pure the temple of the heart from the pollutions of sin than to protect the temple at Jerusalem against the Chaldeans?

S. C. Had they done so they would also have retained the outward temple, for God seeketh nothing other than that the heart be free from sin. But to come to a close. When the citizens of the besieged city were quite exhausted, and nearly starved, a general assault was made by the enemy on the 9th of the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, and the city was carried by storm about midnight, and every place was filled with blood and slaughter. But when the king saw this, he, with his wives and children, and some few of his friends, escaped privately out of the city. But they

could not escape the vengeance of God. They were pursued, and soon taken and brought to Nebuchadnezzar, at Riblah, a city of Syria, in the land of Hamath, afterwards called Antioch. Here they beheld each other with sorrowful hearts; they were dragged about at night. Thus they were sensibly reminded of their treatment towards the prophet Jeremiah.

W. S. How awful must haev been the destruction in Jerusalem !

S. C. That you may imagine. My heart trembles ! None were spared ; there was no respect shown to person. The enraged soldiery ransacked the whole city and slew all they found. The whole city was filled with blood, slaughter, and dread carnage. The priests were murdered in the sanctuary ; women were defloured, and the virgins disgraced and slain ; the young men who escaped the sword were made slaves. Every street was filled with the noise and alarm of war. Some were begging for mercy, but mercy was denied them. Nebuzaradan, who conducted the siege, had all the fortifications of Jerusalem destroyed, plundered the temple, carried the best of the people that remained alive captives to Babylon, and left the poorer sort to till the ground.

W. S. Father, please to tell me the remainder of this history.

S. C. The temple, which was a sanctuary

to all the people for the space of 427 years, and a crown to Israel, was now set on fire. All the curious carved wood work was burnt. The smoke of the whole city now ascended in thick columns ; the palaces and stately houses tumbled down ; the marble pavements were covered over by the fallen walls, the gates were broken down, the streets were one heap of ruins ; in short, the conflagration continued till all was burned to cinders. Nothing remained but a few fragments of the walls as standing monuments of the former glory and greatness of the city.

W. S. How changeable are all things !

S. C. About that time there also was a great city in Abyssinia destroyed, called Nineveh ; it was destroyed by Xerxes, the king of the Medes.

W. S. But before you enter into the history of foreign nations, please to give me a fuller account of Zedekiah the king.

S. C. This miserable man, when he appeared before the king Nebuchadnezzar, who, with his princes, was sitting upon the throne, was then reproached with his breach of fidelity and allegiance. Nebuchadnezzar ordered his sons, and the princes that were taken with him, to be slain before his eyes ; after which terrible spectacle his own eyes were put out. 2 Kings xxv. 7. He was blind before, though seeing the distress of Jeremiah, and was fully convinced of his error in giving heed

to false prophets. Nebuzaradan, who had the command of the army, took also Seraiah, the high-priest, Zephaniah, the second priest, several of the king's principal officers, and sixty of the chief inhabitants of Jerusalem, and brought them to the king of Babylon, who put them all to death, and thus the kingdom of Judah ended, after existing 500 years, in the 43d year of the Grecian Olympiad. In Assyria reigned king Nebuchadnezzar ; and at Rome, Lucius Tarquinus Priscus, the 15th king of that city, which was built 145 years ago, and is now prospering like Carthage, which is 136 years older than Rome.

W. S. Did you not say that God had promised David an abiding, an everlasting kingdom ? How does it happen that it is already ended ? And it appears that the kingdoms of the heathens, who had not this assurance, are more prosperous than that of the children of Israel !

S. C. That is true, it appears so on first view ; but amidst all their tribulations, this promise was renewed unto them by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others, not only in Judea, but also while they were at Babylon, in the midst of their oppressions. Yea, the time, the place, and circumstances were described, the place where, how, and under what circumstances this king should be born, who would again restore the sceptre to Judah, and it so happened ; although you see

me, a decrepit and aged person, sit and weep in this ruined kingdom, and where nothing is to be seen but the ruins of walls and stately palaces, and it appears to be incredible ; but the worm that rose out of the ashes of this phoenix exceeded and disappointed all. What, my son, do you expect one disaster to follow another ? Do you not know all things are liable to be changed ; and you look for what God promised in the days of Adam to be fulfilled. Thus the degenerate race has been preserved so long, and through malice and ignorance, persecuted and killed the prophets of God ; therefore has this visitation of God's righteous judgments been brought upon them. But you bring me into a sea of troubles, for when I reflect on the visitation of Jerusalem, I am made sorrowful.

W. S. Father, I know that on account of your sorrows, you are much perplexed. Now, I will listen attentively to your narration, for I am ambitious to hear how this people ultimately fared.

S. C. Well may I say with the prophet Jeremiah, "O, that my head were a fountain of water, to lament the slain of my people ;" for the tribulations which he saw in his day were as great as those which I saw. But, to answer your question in the chronological order of history, be it then known to you first, that there was a great joy occasioned among

the poor people of the land by this occurrence; the great and mighty, to whom the poorer class were obliged to pay much of the money earned by hard labours, were now removed, or carried away captive; and the poor could now enjoy the fruits of their own labour. In this respect it was a blessing to the majority. It appeared that a new and golden era was to take its beginning, for all the possessions reverted to those who tilled the ground; and this golden period would have continued, if the few wicked who were left in the country had not changed it into iron, in that they slew Gedaliah, the governor of Judah, under whose protection they enjoyed perfect peace. Jeremiah opposed this horrible act, and then they fled into Egypt* and took Jeremiah with them, and there worshipped idols; and although he reproved and warned them of their sins, they stoned him to death, and the land of Judah lay waste for the space of seventy years, as it had been predicted!

W. S. But how did the Jews fare at Babylon?

S. C. Your question is a proper one; but don't you see night is approaching, and that I, an old man, should needs go to rest?

* They fled to Migdol over against Baalzephon, near the Red Sea; at Tahpanhes or Daphane, not far from Pelusium at Naph or Memphis, situate above the parting of the Nile, or where Delta begins, and in the country of Pathros or Thebais, so called from the city of Thebes.—*Trans.*

W. S. I heartily wish the day were three times as long, if it were not too fatiguing to tell me more about them. I am exceedingly anxious to hear.

S. C. For my part I would be willing, but there is a medium in all things. If you please, come to-morrow again to this same spot, then we will conclude their history. If you will have the goodness to go with me to my house, you are perfectly welcome. Yonder is my house; all things are at your service that I have, and I trust you will be served therewith.

W. S. Father, you offer me more than I desire. I am exceedingly well pleased with your company; but it will be advisable that I meditate on your narration in retirement. I will find a place where to spend the night, even should it be in one of those decayed buildings: to-morrow morning early I will be here, for I am very anxious to hear the end of this history. Good night, father.

S. C. Good night to you, my son.

DIALOGUE IV.

[THE SECOND PART OF THIS DIALOGUE COMPRISES A PERIOD OF SIX HUNDRED AND FIVE YEARS—FROM THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.]

Wandering Soul. THE beloved gray-headed old man, with his white beard, is already waiting on Mount Zion. I do not know how he can ascend the mountain so easily, for, if I am rightly informed, this mountain is eight hundred feet above the surrounding level; besides, the mountain is nearly overgrown with thistles and covered with stone; but zeal and love effect much. He sees me coming, and is ready to serve me in relating history. Good morning, aged father; may God enlighten your heart, as the bright sun does the earth.

Simon Cleophas. This is a good wish, my son; why do you come so late?

W. S. I detained myself in the city, in viewing the broken-down walls, on which I saw a great many owls' nests, some crows' nests, nests of swallows: all these things excited new ardour within me to understand the history. As you have told me all about this city, in chronological order, what befell it till the first destruction thereof, and the leading away of the children of Israel into

captivity, I would therefore entreat you to tell me further what befell this people in a foreign land.

S. C. There we left off our dialogue, but you may imagine how they felt, being one hundred and seventy miles from home, and among a strange nation. Every thing was different from theirs in their own country, the mountains, the rivers, the forests, the fields, the animals, also the customs and manners of the people differed from theirs; they were grumly looked upon, their laws despised, their customs rejected; they were laughed and mocked at as fools, serving a God who could not protect them. How many a sigh this occasioned! They met with what David had predicted long beforehand, saying, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof." Ps. cxxxvii. 1, 2. Often did they reflect upon their wicked course of living when they were in better circumstances, and then lamented their own condition most bitterly: "O, that we had to live over our past lives, how diligently and zealously we would serve the Lord! How we would love one another. How ready we would be to do the commands of the Lord; and our tongues we would employ in the praises of God." But all these lamentations availed them nothing. They were

obliged to accommodate themselves to the time and circumstances in which they were placed. Their princes were laid in chains. Those who escaped the sword were obliged to serve Nebuchadnezzar. They all, without exception, were compelled to bow and yield to the haughty Chaldeans; whether they were willing or not, they had to do it; and thus, in their bondage, reflect on their former course, how they had mispent their day of improvement; instead of serving God, they spent their time in hoarding up riches, and had their affections placed upon the things of this world. Revelling and surfeiting occupied much of their time; nay, robbing, murdering, and other abominations. Now they could form some idea of the horrid feelings of their fellow-men, whom they tortured with excruciating punishments. Here they might enjoy the feelings and pains the prophets had to experience, while they led them to prisons and tortures, weeping. Now they wept and lamented over their conduct towards them, but it was too late.

W. S. From your remarks I conclude that it was much better for them that they were thus afflicted, than to have continued in their former course of sensuality and sin.

S. C. Your observation is correct, my son; for all things are permitted of God to work for our good; but it would have been better

for them had they not brought this upon themselves.

W. S. I acknowledge it to be so, but I have another question : were they not compelled to worship the idols of that country ?

S. C. I have many wondrous things to tell concerning that. King Nebuchadnezzar had conquered many nations—he made many tributary to him, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, even from the borders of Libya to Spain. The success of his conquest ascribed all to his idols, especially to Jupiter Belus, who was worshipped by his ancestors, in honour of whom he made a great golden image, Dan. iii. 5, and commanded that all should worship the image ; and all manner of musical instruments were played at the time, to induce them to worship ; and to compel them, he had a fiery furnace prepared for all who refused. Thus you may imagine what the feelings were of those who would have preferred death to worshipping idols. They first attempted the nobility, to have them worship the idols. The three young noblemen who were led captive with Jehoiachin, as I told you before, were first commanded to fall down and worship the idol. The king threatened them, but they refused ; they were then shown the fiery furnace, but this did not move them, and although they were of the nobility, they were bound and cast into the fiery furnace. But, behold what happen-

ed ; the fire lost its power, and they who were to be burnt seemed to enjoy themselves as in a pleasant garden, walking to and fro in the midst of the flames, instead of weeping and wailing. Heavenly music was heard in the furnace, and instead of a glimmering flame, the brightness of an angel was seen, which was so pleasant to behold, that when the king saw this great and unexpected miracle, his cruelty was changed into benevolence and levity ; otherwise these Jews would have fared differently. They would have been cruelly roasted, nay, perhaps they would have all been extirpated.

W. S. You are relating astonishing things.

S. C. A like miracle happened when Daniel was cast into the lion's den to be devoured, because he refused to worship the golden image. Dan. vi. 16. But it appeared that the ferocity of them was changed into the gentleness of lambs ; they licked him ; to be torn of them there was no danger, because they were not hungry ; but they were deprived of their ferocity till their accusers were cast into the den, then they lost all gentleness ; they opened their jaws, and their devouring propensity was increased, so that the very instant they were thrown into the den, they were devoured.

W. S. Father, this must have been a holy prophet.

S. C. He was also filled with wisdom, that none of the magi, the astrologers, or courtiers were to be compared with him. Nothing was too difficult for him to resolve; nay, he predicted not only what was to befall the Jews, touching their utter extirpation as a people, the advent and commission of the truly Anointed, his everlasting kingdom, and his final judgment, but also predicted concerning the heathen monarchies; their condition and progress, their true state, and how long they were to continue; and all this with so much distinctness, that his book of prophecy seems to be rather a history of past events than a prophecy of coming events. And although Solon and some other Greeks were highly renowned, yet they could not be compared with Daniel. He was a holy and wise man. The aforesaid king Nebuchadnezzar and his son, Evil-Merodach, reigned thirty years. 2 Kings xxv. 27, who released Jechonias from the prison. After him reigned Belshazzar twelve years, who was a great sensualist. At a great feast, while tasting the wine freely, he commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father had taken out of the temple of the Lord; and made them instruments of foul debauch. He and his princes, his wives and concubines drank out of them—they all drank freely—drank excessively, and worshipped their

gods* of gold, of silver, of iron, of brass, wood and stones; but this midnight revelling cost him dear, nothing less than his life and his kingdom. Daniel, who survived both these kings, was also highly esteemed of Darius, king of the Medes, under whose reign he died, and in the city Ecbatana his name is known to this day; for that magnificent city bears testimony to the magnanimity of this great man, Daniel, of prophetic spirit.

W. S. O, the greatness of this man! But you intimated something touching Belshazzar; I would like to hear something more of him.

S. C. To relate all how this happened requires a long history. There was a king of Media, called Astiages, who commanded his sister's child, called Cyrus, to be thrown before some wild beasts; for it had been foretold that this child was born to destroy him and his kingdom. But he who was appointed to kill the child saved his life, and raised him. After Cyrus grew to be a man, he, with the

* Passingly strange as it may appear in the case before us, that these temperate topers, while under the influence of strong drink, should now think of worshipping their gods, it will not appear quite as strange when we pause and look around us. Look upon nominal professors of religion, we mean such as attend to all the ordinances of the house of the Lord and drink a dram freely,—and, alas, there are too many of this description, and when we see and hear them talk long and loudest when under the exhilarating influence of a necessary morning, noon, evening, and before-going-to-bed *dram*, something to do their stomach good and clear the head! We know several professors, deceivers of the brethren, that talk most on the subject of religion when *half drunk!*—*Trans.*

aid of Darius, invaded Media, and extended his provinces, and at last took possession of Babylon also ; even at the very hour when Belshazzar was engaged in revelling, and making debauchery of the sacred vessels, as already related, and being apprized of his fate by a handwriting on the wall, which caused him to fear and tremble exceedingly. These were presages of his impending destruction. I say in the very act of revelling Cyrus took him by surprise. Thus ended the Assyrian empire after it had subsisted 1636 years, and having had thirty-eight kings from the time of Nimrod, the mighty hunter. And from that time Cyrus dated the beginning of the Persian monarchy, who, with a powerful army, overran Syria, Egypt, Armenia, and Asia, and conquered, besides many more, Croesus, king of Lydia.

W. S. Wonderful revolutions in the kingdoms of this world ! But, generally speaking, new lords make new laws. Did this revolution not affect the Jews ?

S. C. Yes, it did ; they derived a decided advantage from it, for Cyrus emancipated the Jews in the first year of his reign, after they were seventy years in captivity ; and he did not only deliver up to them the sacred vessels, but also encouraged them to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, as it had been prophesied beforehand. 2 Chron. xxxix. 22. Ezra i. 1. Then there was great rejoicing

among the Jews ; they came from every part under the command of their chief man Zerubbabel, who was the son of Salathiel, the son of Jeconiah, king of the Jews. Then was the dispersed kingdom changed into a principality, and their bondage into perfect liberty. When more than 42,000 were collected, besides women, children, men-servants and maid-servants, and also a great number of horses, mules, camels, and asses laden with gold, silver, and other household goods, besides the sacred utensils belonging to the house of the Lord, all came up out of Chaldea into Jerusalem, which was one desolate waste, even as it is at present. They had to travel about 170 miles through wilderness and deserts, as well as through highly cultivated parts of the country, protected on all sides by the hand of God, without any other protection. Thus they travelled onward till they had a full view of the city. The music, the sound of trumpets, of cymbals, of harps, is more readily imagined than described ; there was a general burst of joy.

W. S. It appears to me that I almost realize in my own feelings their joys. But what happened to them after they had arrived at the city ?

S. C. As soon as they had unladen their horses, mules, camels, and asses, and put them to pasture, they commenced making preparations to build. They made ready their

tools and implements ; foundations were dug, the masons stretched their lines, the hoary-headed gave directions, one standing here, another there ; here one weeping, there another weeping, in reflecting on the former days of the city. The high-priest Joshua, with the chief fathers, superintended the building. Ezra iii. 10-13. And as soon as the foundation of the temple was laid, the echoing air reverberated with joyous sound of music, mingled with the shouts of the people, praising the Lord God for his goodness and mercy. The foundation of the temple was laid with great joy and solemnity about the 20th of April, in the second year after their return ; but the old men amongst them, who had seen the former temple built by Solomon, wept, because it so little corresponded with the magnificence of that structure.

W. S. What a wonderful noise !

S. C. This would have all been to their great joy had not dark and lowering clouds of tribulation intercepted the rays of prosperity.

W. S. What kind of clouds were these ?

S. C. It appears that God proves his children in many diverse ways. Before the temple was near finished, there came messengers, sent by persons envious of their prosperity, commanding them, on penalty of danger, not to prosecute the work.

W. S. O, the sudden change ! How did

they dare to oppose them when Cyrus had given them permission to build the city and temple?

S. C. This king was involved in many wars, and was ultimately conquered by the Scythian queen Thomyris, and beheaded,* because he before had beheaded her son, and many other princes; and she cast his head in a vessel filled with blood; saying, “Drink thy fill of blood, for which thou hast thirsted for a long time.” Cyrus was succeeded in the kingdom by his son Cambyses, a cruel tyrant; he was instigated by the Samonians, Ammonites, and Moabites, and other enemies of the Jews. But after reigning six years, he fell upon his own sword and died; and he was succeeded by Darius Hystaspes, a virtuous and wise king, during whose reign the Jews were inspired, and being encouraged by the prophet Haggai and Zacharias, they commenced building with renewed vigour, having the assurance of the king that he was pleased with them.

W. S. So then the building went on.

S. C. The temple was finished in the sixth

* Authors are herein much divided; some pretending that he was slain in an engagement with the people of Samos, others that he was taken prisoner and hanged. Some affirm that he died of a wound. In my opinion, it is very probable that he died peaceably in his own country, about seventy years of age, after he had reigned seven years from the death of his uncle and copartner Darius.—*Trans.*

year of the reign of Darius, and was dedicated with great solemnity ; but the walls and other buildings of the city were left in their desolate condition for the want of people and proper arrangements. Shortly after Xerxes succeeded in the kingdom, Ezra,* a scribe, came up to Jerusalem with a mighty and wealthy people ; and Ezra reigned but a short time till the arrival of Nehemiah, the cup-bearer to Ahasuerus. Immediately on his arrival, they all set about repairing the walls, and completed them within fifty-two days, notwithstanding the opposition they met with from Sanballat, Tobiah, and others. They completed the repairs of the walls, and set up the gates thereof, and dedicated them and the city, in a solemn manner, unto the Lord. During the reign of this king, all things were restored to perfect order ; a proper ceremony was introduced among the Jews, and thus did Nehemiah as much in promoting the prosperity of this people as Junius Brutus and Lucius did thirty years before in repairing the city of Rome, in the reign of the seventh king, and after the kingdom had subsisted two hun-

* Ezra held the administration of both civil and ecclesiastical affairs ; but, upon his being appointed governor, he confined himself to the care of ecclesiastical affairs only ; and it is said that he revised and digested most of the books of the Scripture, settled the canon of the Old Testament, and fixed the number of books to twenty-two.

dred and forty-four years; and Rome was from thenceforth governed by a mayor, as the Jews were by princes and high-priests.*

W. S. Who was the last prophet?

S. C. Malachi† was the last of the lesser prophets, and lived about four hundred years before Christ, of whose coming he prophesied.

W. S. So I hear that the light of the prophet ceased from this time forth, and that the prophecy was sealed.

S. C. But God did not leave the world in darkness, as if he were not further to instruct the people; not to tell you of the Cybeles, who prophesied in some remarkable instances, there were still enlightened, learned, and very useful men in Greece at this time; there was Simonides, Pythagoras, and Anacreon—the laughing Democritus,‡ who continually laughed at the follies of mankind, who distracted themselves with care; and the weeping Heraclitus, who wept at the follies of man-

* Nehemiah's death was followed with a change of government at Jerusalem. Judea had no longer a governor of its own; it was united to the prefecture of Syria, the rulers of which committed the administration of both civil and ecclesiastical affairs to the high-priests for the time being.—*Trans.*

† Malachi was not the proper but the generical name of a certain prophet, and signifies *my angel*, or *my messenger*. Some of the ancients suppose that Ezra was the person to whom this name is to be attributed.—*Trans.*

‡ He was the author of the doctrine of atoms, and first taught that the milky-way was occasioned by a confused light from a multitude of stars. He may be considered as the parent of experimental philosophy. He died 361 years before Christ.—*Trans.*

kind. Both these contributed to the improvement of mankind, entreating them to good, saying all was vanity : and of this they had a striking instance in the loss of Xerxes's army of one million of men, when he invaded Greece ; and how the conqueror Themistocles was banished from Athens ; and the like vanities, and wicked works of the world.

W. S. Father, if you please, tell me more concerning the Jews.

S. C. They suffered many things. They stood in danger of being wholly extirpated.

W. S. Why were they in danger ?

S. C. After the son of Xerxes, Artaxerxes, surnamed Longimanus, succeeded in the kingdom, and by the advice of his nobles, divorced queen Vashti, and married Esther, an orphan brought up by her kinsman, Mordecai ; and when Mordecai refused to bow down before a mighty prince called Haman, then he had a decree passed that all the Jews were to be slain in one day. This he did to avenge himself of Mordecai, without reflecting on the injustice of the act ; the sighings of the innocent, the weeping and wailing of orphans and distressed widows, which was general, and especially in this city ; all this he did not take to heart. The enemies of the Jews rejoiced to have the opportunity of whetting their swords to execute the decree. Some mocked and laughed at their calamity

The more honourable did not approve of it, and censured this act highly. When their despair was the greatest, God, who controls all according to the pleasure of his will, most wonderfully relieved his chosen people. As the decree was about executing, Haman was hanged upon a tree, and Mordecai was promoted to be the second in the kingdom. This intelligence was soon received throughout all the land, by means of the posts. The Jews assembled and praised God for this great deliverance.

W. S. Did they expect that their ancient kingdom would be again restored, and flourish as it did before?

S. C. Far from it. It is true that their priests ruled quietly : for instance, Eliashib, Jehoiakim's successor, reigned more than forty years, till the time of Jehoiada, the high-priest ; but this was far from restoring the kingdom to its former greatness, for the world and the kingdoms thereof are subject to many vicissitudes. Although I have not time fully to relate all, I will barely mention the heavy wars which exhausted Greece—the Athenian and Lacedemonian wars—besides the pestilence, which walks in darkness and lays waste and makes desolate, scourged them. Many suffered so excruciatingly, that to seek relief they ran into the waters, and thus many perished. At the same time, other countries were sorely afflict-

ed by war, famine, and pestilence ; and why should they care about the external grandeur of their kingdom, because life is frail and uncertain ; and even the wise philosophers of that day, such as Socrates, Hippocrates, Aristophanes, and others, were more concerned about their souls than about any thing else.

W. S. Nevertheless, is it not right to set a proper estimate upon the things of this world ?

S. C. I acknowledge it is, therefore I am relating you the history of secular matters ; however, with a view to lead you to that which pertains to your spiritual welfare.

W. S. What befell the Persian kingdom ?

S. C. After the demise of Longimanus, who had reigned 44 years, Darius Nothus succeeded to rule. In the eighth year of his reign, Johanan became governor of the Jews, and reigned fifty-three years. When Darius Nothus left the throne, Artaxerxes Mnemon succeeded him, and reigned 36 years, after he had conquered his brother Cyrus. After him reigned Ochus 26 years in the Persian monarchy, and made many tributary.

W. S. Many occurrences must have taken place during this time among other nations.

S. C. Yes, indeed, my son ; however, I need not take up much time in relating how the Gauls had nearly made themselves masters of Rome, nor to tell you of the glory of Greece, which was illuminated by their wise

men, Plato, Diogenes, Aristotle,* and other excellent men ; nor of the fame of the great monument Mausoleum,† which was a wonder of the age. All these are rather too insignificant to occupy much of our attention, they are all transitory. For where are the great walls of Babylon, built more than 2000 years ago by queen Semiramis, which were sixty miles long, and eighty-seven feet thick, and 350 feet in height?—yes, where is Semiramis with her innumerable army of 1,700,000 soldiers and 200,000 of cavalry, which she brought into the field of battle against Zoroaster, and conquered him, who attempted to repulse her with an army of not less than 400,000. Where are they all ?

W. S. How is it possible to collect so many people ?

S. C. O, my son, that is nothing strange, for our forefathers lived a long time ; and the human family would necessarily increase greatly. For suppose one of the fathers would have had ten sons and ten daughters in one hundred years, and each, in the same space, were to have ten sons and daughters ; thus in the course of one thousand years the population would not be short of one thousand millions.

* Aristippus, Xenophon, Isocrates, disciples of Socrates.—*Trans.*

† Called Mausoleum, because Artemisia, queen of Caria, erected one in memory of her husband Mausolus : from this monument all other magnificent sepulchres and tombs have received the same name.—*Trans.*

W. S. Father, you are telling me wonders!

S. C. Yes, my dear son; these are all nothing. Where is the temple* of Diana at Ephesus, the ornament of all Asia? The temple is no more, nothing but the remaining ruins thereof are to be seen. Where is the Olympiad temple, with the great image of Jupiter, so artfully made? Where are all the Olympiad games? Where is the great Mausoleum, which queen Artemisia erected to the memory of her husband? Is there one stone of it remaining? This will be the fate of Pharos, the Alexandrine wonder, of the Egyptian pyramids, no matter how splendid and durable, for there is nothing in this world of an abiding nature. What were people wont to say of the great *Colossus*, the brazen image of Rhodes, which stood with distended legs upon the two moles which formed the entrance of the harbour, serving as a lighthouse for mariners. It was the wonder of the age,† and after having stood two hundred years it was broken off at the knces, and

* The temple of Diana, which was so splendid an edifice as to be styled one of the seven wonders of the world. Its erection occupied, according to Pliny, 220 years. The building was 425 feet long and 220 broad, and contained 127 columns, each the gift of a king. The architect was Ctesiphore.

† It passed for one of the seven wonders of the world. It was the workmanship of Chares, a pupil of Lysippus, who was employed twelve years in making it. It was erected 300 years before Christ, and after having stood but 66 years (not 200, as the author says), it fell down by an earthquake. In the year A. D. 672 it was sold by the Saracens, who were masters of the island, to a Jewish merchant of Edessa, who loaded 900 camels with brass.—*Trans.*

thrown down by an earthquake ; and the fall of it into the water caused a sounding noise, as if the city of Rhodes itself would sink. Behold fortified cities, how they are falling into ruins ! What a great city was Tyre, one of the greatest seaports in the world ; nay, the very emporium of commerce, bidding defiance to Alexander, because they were surrounded by sea and isolated from land ; yea, it appeared as if they were wedded to the sea, and could not be divorced from it. But hear the sequel. Alexander the Great joined the island to the continent by a mole, and took it with much difficulty, after a siege of seven months, on the 20th of August, B.C. 332. He entered the city, laid it waste, and turned their splendid palaces into stables for his horses. But I will stop with this history, and will tell you more concerning my own nation, which had to suffer so much from the heathens.

W. S. Father, will you be kind enough to tell me about your nation ?

S. C. It is lamentable how the sacred priesthood was violated ; for Johanan, the successor of Joida, slew Joshua in the temple, and polluted the holy place with blood ; therefore did Bagoses, the Persian governor, harass the land for seven years, and esteemed our nation the less on account of the murder committed.

W. S. O, lamentable occurrence !

S. C. Besides this, they met with another tribulation ; for the aforesaid Johanan leaving two sons, the elder called Jabus, being high-priest, the other called Manasses, who married a Samaritan woman, which caused a division in Israel ; and what made it still worse, he built a temple on Mount Gerizim, confirmed the Samaritans in their error, and persuaded many to offer there, disregarding the law of Moses, and despising the whole nation. To describe the miseries thereof is not in my power.

W. S. Was there none in the Persian empire that could have settled this matter ?

S. C. Alas ! every thing was ominous of evil in that kingdom.

W. S. Why, father ?

S. C. I will tell you. After Arsanes, the son of Ochus, was succeeded by Darius, Alexander, Philip's son, king of Macedonia, rose up against him ; and in a very short time he subdued and conquered all Greece, and crossed the Hellespont, and went into Persia, and having many skilled warriors, he conquered the king Darius's chief commander, and took possession at the same time of the kingdoms of Lydia, Jonia, Caria, and many more. And when king Darius went out against him, although he had three times the force that Alexander had, still, contrary to all human expectation, he was defeated and routed ; so he fled, and his mother, wife, and

children were taken prisoners of Alexander, who pushed onward in his career, conquering all the provinces of Asia Minor. He obtained two other celebrated victories over Darius at Issus and Arbela ; took Tyre, after an obstinate siege of seven months, and slaughtered 2000 of the inhabitants in cool blood, and made himself master of Egypt, Media, Lydia, and Persia. In the mean time, when Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, saw the success of Alexander, he united with him and procured a grant for the aforesaid Manasseh to build on Mount Gerizim, near Samaria, a temple like that at Jerusalem, and thus this division in Judea was brought about nearly 200 years after the Babylonian captivity.

W. S. O, the wonderful history ! But how was it with Jerusalem ? Did not the people greatly fear at Jerusalem ?

S. C. Certainly they did ; and they had much reason to fear ; for when Jaddua did not immediately obey Alexander, he threatened the city with resentment. And after he had conquered Tyre, Gaza, and other cities, he marched with a large army against Jerusalem, to punish the Jews. The people wept and wailed, the high-priest was supplicating God ; and being directed by a night vision, met the conqueror in his priestly robes with the other priests attending him in proper habits, and all the people in white

garments. Alexander, being struck with this sight, saluted the high-priest with a religious veneration, embraced him, and declared that he himself, in Macedonia, had seen this very same person, thus dressed, in a night vision, encouraging him to pursue his expedition against the Persians, and promising him success.

W. S. Behold the dealings of God ! how wondrous are His ways !

S. C. Therefore did he grant this city and the whole country great liberty ; and giving them many presents to adorn the temple. He then marched into Egypt, and took possession of the whole country ; built the city of Alexandria* on the western side of the Nile, near the coast of the Mediterranean, and extended his conquests to Spain. The next spring he hastened to find out Darius Codomanus, king of Persia, whom he had routed once before, and he now vanquished him in a final decisive battle, and became master of Persia ; and thus ended the Persian monarchy, after subsisting 208 years, and the Grecian monarchy raised upon the ruins thereof, nearly 300 years after the Babylonian captivity.

W. S. It appears that Jerusalem and Judea were about to flourish once more.

* He peopled Alexandria with several nations, among them were many Jews, to whom he gave the same privileges as to his own Macedonians.—*Trans.*

S. C. Alas ! the afflictions of this people were innumerable ; for shortly after the death of Alexander, and while his heirs were contending for power, Ptolemy Lagus vanquished Jerusalem by fraud ; for in the tenth year of Onias the high-priest, having understood that the Jews would rather suffer death than take up arms and defend themselves on their Sabbath, he stormed Jerusalem, and took it without any resistance on that day, and carried above 120,000 of them captives into Egypt.

W. S. Alas ! what distress !

S. C. But it is worthy of honourable and everlasting mentioning, that the pious Ptolemy Philadelphus, the successor of Lagus, restored all these Jews, to the number of 120,000, to their former liberty ; and besides, he evinced a great interest in divine things, finished the college of learned men, and the famous library at Alexandria, begun by his father. That library contained 700,000 volumes, amongst which he placed an authentic translation of the book of law and the prophets, which he procured from Eleazar the high-priest, the successor of Simon Onias. This translation was made by seventy persons, in seventy days, on the island of Pharos.* This king acquired a greater fame than king Pyrrhus in his Italian wars.

* This translation is called the Septuagint, on account of LXXII. translators employed (not LXX.)—*Trans.*

W. S. How cheering it is to hear such good news of those noble men, who had an eye single to virtue. A great degree of praise is due them for their labours of humanity.

S. C. You are certainly right in this. I do consider that neither Seleucus, who conquered Asia, nor Antioch Magnus, his successor, nor Arsaces, the Parthian king, nor Antigonus of Macedon, nor Catulus, who conquered the Carthaginians, all of whom gained much applause in their day, were as happy, or deserving of applause as those wise men who improved the moral condition of their fellow men, among whom there was none more conspicuous than Jesus, the Son of Sirach, who was a luminous star in the days of Ptolemy Evergetus, the successor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, of Alexandria, in whose aphorisms more wisdom is to be found than among all the Stoicks, Epicureans, Platonists; besides the Pythagorean and Peripatetic philosophers, of all Greece. And, alas! had Israel always enjoyed peace, what flourishing people would they have been! But, alas! they were continually harassed and plundered by their powerful rival kings of Egypt and Syria. The calamities which befell Jerusalem about this time are not easily described; for when Ptolemy Philopater defeated Antiochus Magnus in a sore battle, in which no less than 600,000 Jews were slain,

to the great sorrow of all the people, who lived quietly under their governor, Joseph Arses, and their high-priest, Simon Justus, he went up to Jerusalem, and dissemblingly, to offer sacrifice, attempted, contrary to the law* to enter into the SANCTUM SANCTORUM, the holy of holies, he was seized with a sudden terror and consternation, and was obliged to be carried back in a manner half dead; but after he recovered he determined to avenge himself; he took many of the Jews, without respect of person, bound them and carried them down to Alexandria, and was determined to have them destroyed of elephants.† The weeping and lamentation then, are not easily described. But God turned the wild beasts upon those that came to be the spectators of this dreadful carnage, so that numbers of them became victims to their cruel curiosity, and were slain. This judgment so terrified the king and his subjects, that Philopater released the Jews, restored the whole nation to their former privileges, revoked the laws against them, and gave them leave to put those to death who, for fear of

* The holy of holies, where none were allowed to enter but the high-priest, on the great day of expiation.—*Trans.*

† Philopater, this cruel tyrant, deprived the Jews of all their civil rights and privileges, obliged them under pain of death to be stigmatized with a *burn*, representing an IVY LEAF, in honour of Bacchus; and excluded all from his presence that would not sacrifice to this god. He also commanded as many Jews as could be found to be enclosed in the Hippodrome (a place for horse races) at Alexandria, to be devoured of elephants made drunk with wine.—*Trans.*

persecution, had basely apostatized from their religion. And when they returned home, they erected a monument commemorative of their deliverance ; the remains of which are yet to be seen among the ruins of the city.

W. S. What strange vicissitudes befell this people. It is no wonder that you are oft constrained to weep to think upon them.

S. C. Alas, my son, still a more sad history follows !

W. S. I am anxious to hear it.

S. C. It is not a little painful for me to relate ; but for your sake I will. Antiochus Epiphanes was made king in his father's stead, in the 161st year of the Grecian kingdom. At that time Onias was high-priest, and Janna Hircanus chief governor of Judea. He was determined to subdue Egypt, but being obliged to retreat by order of the Romans, he was infuriated, and went up to Jerusalem, which occasioned great weeping and lamentation among women and children, for he did not only plunder the temple of all its costly and splendid ornaments, but he also shed much blood ; his soldiers acted worse than wild beasts, slaughtered the innocent citizens by piercing them through with missile weapons, and cutting their heads off. After having returned to Antioch with his plunder, he regretted it, that he did not wholly raze the city and extirpate the Jews. In two years afterwards,

he sent an army of 22,000 men under Apollonius, his general, with a commission to put all the men of Jerusalem to the sword, and to make slaves of the women and children. As the citizens heard the sound of the drums, and saw the extended banners, they began to fear and tremble ; they would have attempted to resist them and prevented the enemy entering the city, but they entered the city by stratagem on the Sabbath day ; thus none escaped but such as hid in caves, or fled to the mountains. The blood flowed as streams of water. The number slain was about 80,000, besides 40,000 that were bound in chains to be sold as slaves. Houses were set on fire, walls were thrown down, and their magnificent towers razed to the ground ; and upon Mount Acre, there was a castle erected, and a garrison placed therein to annoy the citizens. These were the tribulations which befell this city at this time. But, alas ! this people was still more sorely afflicted.

W. S. Did other calamities befall them ?

S. C. Alas, indeed ! the worshipping of Almighty God was destroyed—the glory of Israel, which exalted them over every other nation. The two sons of Onias, Jason and Menelaus, who were killed, were contending about the priesthood ; they went to Antiochus, promised him money (also to patronize idolatry) ; he was ready to do this, be-

ing a wicked man—he issued out an order that all his dominions should conform to the religion of the king. Athenæus, a Grecian idolater, was selected to instruct all the Jews that would turn idolaters, and punish those who would not. Forbidding their children to be circumcised; forbidding all burnt-offerings and sacrifices in the temple of the God of Israel, and called it the temple of JUPITER OLYMPUS. The books of the law were burned, and women accused of having their children circumcised were dragged about the streets with these children tied about their necks, and both thrown together, headlong, from the highest parts of the walls. A mother and her seven sons were most cruelly tortured. Their instruments of death and modes of torture were of the most cruel kind that the malice of wicked men could invent or inflict. 2 Macc. vii.

W. S. O the calamities that befell this people! Did they not suffer exceedingly?

S. C. This you may readily imagine. The pious did not know whither to flee. As already said, many fled to the desert; some hid in caves, and died of hunger.

W. S. Was there none to redeem them from their sore distress?

S. C. Where should he be? The governor, Janna Hircanus, of the tribe of Judah, was killed, and the nobles slain. The prophets had fled and were murdered, so that

these innocent ones had none to whom they could look for relief.

W. S. Did the governors of Judah yet rule?

S. C. Yes, they did. Rosa Messulam, of royal descent, who had ruled sixty-six years, was succeeded by John, who ruled fifty-three years; after him ruled Judas Hircanus fourteen years, Joseph seven years, Abner Simei eleven years, Mattathias Eli twelve years, Assar Mahat nine years, Arphaxad ten years, Agar Eli eight years, Maslot Nahum seven years, Amos Syrach fourteen years, Mattathias Silo ten years, Joseph Arses sixty-six years, and after him, Janna Hircanus sixteen years, which amount to (including the fifty-eight years while Zorobabel ruled) three hundred and sixty-one years since the Babylonian captivity till the present distressing time.

W. S. It certainly appears that the whole nation of Jews was to be extirpated, and the law of God to be wholly destroyed.

S. C. This would have been the case if God had not miraculously interposed.

W. S. How did he interpose?

S. C. Do you see the ruins of several buildings on that mountain south of us?

W. S. I see them.

S. C. Formerly there was a small village there, called Modin, where resided a respectable priest called Mattathias; his father's*

* Mattathias was a great grandson of Asmonæus, and a priest of the first course.—*Trans.*

name was Asmonæus. It grieved Mattathias to see Jerusalem laid waste, and the law trampled under foot, and his people most unmercifully murdered ; seeing a Jew that dared approach the idolatrous altar, he despatched him and the king's commissioner, who looked upon it with impunity ; he then fled, with his five sons and others that were oppressed, into the desert, and remained for a time in caves. But as soon as the garrison was apprized of this, they went out to fight against him ; and because the Jews were not allowed to defend themselves on the Sabbath, more than one thousand were killed in the caves : but when Mattathias encouraged them to fight and defend themselves on the Sabbath day (for on account of this superstitious notion, not to defend themselves on this day, many were destroyed by their enemies), he, at the head of them, quitted the mountains, marched boldly towards Jerusalem, for the Assideans, a valiant, pious people, united with him, pulled down the heathen altars he met with, restored the true worship of God and the rite of circumcision among the Jews. He died in the 146th year of the Seleucides, leaving five sons, one of whom, Judas Maccabeus, was appointed captain general of the people.

W. S. Thus there was a great consternation in the land.

S. C. The commotions were great; drums

were heard daily. Those rebels who rose up against the king were slain ; but Judas,* although he had but few people, valiantly resisted, conquered, and slew Apollonius, Antiochus's general. Macc. iii. 11. After that he defeated Seron, deputy-governor of Coelosyria, slew eight hundred of his men, and put the rest to flight, gained also a victory over Gorgias, one of Antiochus's commanders, and killed 6000 of his men ; and after that he defeated Lysias, the governor of all the country between Euphrates and Egypt, who had penetrated as far as Bethsura, a strong fortress about twenty miles from Jerusalem. All these had great armies ; but Judas, in reliance upon God, with a few men, defeated them completely. This signal success inspired the Jews with new courage. Judas, having now respite, purified the temple, restored the true worship of God, removed all the profanations, built an altar of hewn stones and replaced therein the golden furniture that Antiochus had carried away, and dedicated the temple again, and ordered that a feast of dedication should be

* Judas signalized himself on former occasions, hence he was distinguished by the title *Maccabeus*, which is interpreted by some, *Conqueror in the Lord*. Others are of the opinion, because the motto of his standard was the initial letter of that Hebrew sentence, Exod. xxiv. 11, MI CAMOKA BAELIM JEHOVAH, that is, WHO IS LIKE THEE AMONG THE GODS, O LORD ! which letters were formed into the artificial work MACCABI, and all that fought under his standard were called MACCAEES. To frame words in this way was a common practice among the Jews.—*Trans.*

kept annually on the 25th December. His next care was to subdue the castle on Mount Acre, which Appollonius had erected to command the temple, for the heathens were under the command of Timotheus, the Ammonitish commander, and annoyed the Jews; but Judas soon put an end to them, and took the cities Maspia, Caspis, Mageth, Bosor, Carnaim, Ephron, Asdod, Hebron, and others.

W. S. How did Antiochus seem to like this?

S. C. He was gone to Persia not only to receive his tribute, but to plunder the temple of Diana, called *Zoretes* by the Persians; but not succeeding, and hearing of the news of the defeat of his generals and armies in Judea, he was grieved, and with the utmost rage resolved to hasten to Jerusalem in his chariot. Driving furiously, his chariot was overthrown, and he fell out of it, and was smitten with an incurable disease, besides being sorely bruised. He was forced to be confined to his bed—worms crept from his foul ulcers. He at last confessed his error, and died, and left behind him a son called Antiochus Eupator.

W. S. Did he not carry on the war?

S. C. Yes; he brought a vast army against Judas, consisting of 100,000 foot, 20,000 horse, 32 elephants, 300 armed chariots of war, with his chief commander, besieged the fortification of Bethsura; but they could not subdue Judas; still they entered the city, and

besieged the sanctuary. Shortly afterwards he went to Antioch, there he and Lyrias the commander were slain by order of Demetrius. Afterwards Demetrius ordered Bachides to march an army into Judea, to confirm Alcimus in the pontificate. 1 Macc. vii. 7-9. And when Nicanor had collected large forces, and threatened to demolish the temple, he and his whole army were routed by Judas, who cut off Nicanor's head and his right hand, which he had stretched out against the temple, and hanged them upon one of the towers of Jerusalem, and appointed an anniversary of thanksgiving in memory of this victory, which is called Nicanor's day. And thus were these tyrants taken by their own craftiness. Israel had now respite for a short time.

W. S. What did the successful conqueror do in the mean time?

S. C. The Romans being a renowned people, and he considerably oppressed by the kings of Syria, he entered into covenant with the Romans, in order to be under their protection; for he thought they were powerful enough to conquer any nation; for 46 years before this time, they defeated the Gauls in three successive battles, and subdued them; and 50 years before Scipio took possession of nearly all Spain; and 40 years afterwards he deterred the Carthaginians so much that Hannibal fled, and was glad to make peace; and 30 years after that, Atte

lius Glabruis conquered Antiochus the Great, so that he was compelled to send hostages to Rome ; besides that, Pompilius expelled Epiphanes from Egypt. He reflected much upon the great victories which Paulus Emilius had in Macedonia when he took Perseus the king captive, and led him about triumphantly in Rome. And the whole Grecian armies were subdued unto the Romans. Therefore did Judas make a mutual agreement with the Romans. But it appears this taking refuge unto man did not meet with the approbation of God ; and shortly afterwards he was slain in a battle against Bachides. 1 Macc. ix. 17.

W. S. This must have caused great lamentation among the Jews ?

S. C. Their weeping and wailing are not to be described ; the Gentiles became powerful ; the apostates became haughty, and the impious Alcimus attended to the priest's office in an ungodly manner. When young Onias saw this, he retired into Egypt, and by the permission of the king, built a temple, like the one at Jerusalem at Heliopolis ; although this was contrary to the will of God, yet Onias meant it well, in regard to time and circumstances. Thus was the service of the Jews much neglected. But this state of affairs did not continue long ; for Alcimus was taken away by a sore disease ; and Jonathan, who succeeded his brother as governor,

compelled Bachides to make peace; and afterwards Alexander was made king of Syria, and vanquished Demetrius, and declared Jonathan high-priest, and appointed him governor of the kingdom of Judea; and from that time, Jerusalem and the whole nation began to flourish again, for the kings of Syria opposed one another, each respecting Jonathan and courting his favours. He rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, and adorned them with magnificent towers. At last he was slain of Triphon, after having reigned successfully for the space of seventeen years. Macc. xii. 13.

W. S. I am nearly tired listening to all these tribulations.

S. C. This is not all what befell our nation. But were I to tell you how Lucius Mumius burnt the city of Corinth; and how Carthage, which subsisted 700 years, was burnt by Scipio Africanus, the conflagration of which lasted for seventeen days, and 50,000 citizens leaving it weeping; also how the city Numantium, in Spain, was destroyed; and how the inhabitants slew one another; all this would consume much time. What a cruel carnage this was, besides thousands of others who were slain in seven pitched battles fought against Viritus. O, my son, were I to give you a minute detail of all this, there would be much reason to be sorrowing.

W. S. I have no desire to hear these things.
Only tell me concerning Israel.

S. C. After the death of Jonathan, Simon, his brother, was high-priest and governor of the people. He erected a splendid marble monument to the memory of his father, mother, and brothers, at Modin, the remains of which are yet to be seen. After reigning seven years he was slain of Ptolemy, his son-in-law, while at a feast. 1 Macc. xvi. 16. He left a son, called John Hircanus, who succeeded him in the priesthood.

W. S. How did he behave?

S. C. Even while his father was yet living, he signalized himself by vanquishing Cendebeus, who was sent out by the daughter of Antiochus; and afterwards saved Jerusalem from being besieged, and purchased from Antiochus the privilege of living in peace. Then the Jews were not molested in their religious exercises. And when there was wanting a large sum of money, he opened the tomb of David and took 3000 talents therefrom; and after Antiochus's daughter was slain in battle against Demetrius, Hircanus took possession of many cities, raised the temple on Mount Griezim, which was built more than 200 years before; conquered the Idumeans, and renewed the covenant with the Romans; and there being at that time two Antiochuses, one surnamed Griphus, the other Cicizenus,

who contended a long time for the crown of Syria. John had a little respite during this time, and could do whatever he pleased; he besieged Samaria, entered the city and destroyed it.

W. S. It appears that the Jews were prospering under the reign of their governor, Hircanus.

S. C. Every thing was involved in misery; for during the time of besieging Samaria, Antiochus Cicizenus plundered the country, set fire to their houses, and slew thousands of the Jews in the most cruel and shameful manner. Weeping and wailing were heard in all the land; besides this, the common people were so enraged at him, that they reproached him all his lifetime afterwards.

W. S. I am astonished at that, and I would like to know the cause of it.

S. C. At that time there were the sects among the Jews—the Pharisees, the Essenes, and Sadducees. The Pharisees had the greatest influence among the people, for they were shrewd and designing, and thus they controlled them at pleasure. At first, Hircanus adhered to the Pharisees, afterwards he turned to the Sadducees, and forbade the observance of the traditions of the Pharisees; and thus the enmity arose against him. After all, he died in peace, having reigned thirty-one years.

W. S. Did the Jews prosper again?

S. C. Their principality was changed to a regal government, for the oldest son of Hircanus, called Aristobulus, assumed the royal honour by taking the sceptre and the crown; but having polluted his hands in his own brother's, Antigonus's blood, whom he had killed, he only reigned one year, and expired upon a death-bed of repentance, leaving his queen Alexandra, who had a worthy brother called Alexander Jamne, who was made king, and reigned twenty-seven years. But his was an unhappy reign, for the country was continually robbed and plundered by the contending Assyrian kings; and especially when Ptolemy Lathyrus, king of Cyprus, came into Judea, and waged a bloody war against Alexander, and vanquished him and slew 30,000 Jews, and filled the town of Galilee with blood and carnage.

W. S. O, the barbarous cruelty!

S. C. I do not know who was the greater tyrant of the two, Alexander Jamne or Ptolemy, for after he had besieged several cities, and taken possession of Gaza, he destroyed it most shamefully, burnt it down, killed the citizens, and slew 500 of their counsellors in the temple of Apollo. On account of this cruel carnage, he was esteemed among the Jews as unworthy the priesthood; therefore did they, at one of their feasts, throw at him with citrons, which grieved him, and in a rage he slew 6000 of them, and thus their

feast-day was stained with blood. But he was still more cruel, he crucified 800 of the seditious Jews, and while under excruciating pains, he slew their wives and children before their eyes. I believe, therefore, that Alexander was as cruel as Ptolemy. It is a question with me, whether he was not even more cruel than Sylla, who, about this time, got the advantage of his rival, Marius, and entered Rome like a tyrant and a conqueror, filling the streets daily with dead bodies: he massacred 700,000 citizens to whom he had promised pardon. The number of slain is greater than that slain by Alexander, but in cruelty he exceeded Sylla, and simply because one was a Jew, and the other an ignorant heathen.

W. S. O the bloody times and miseries of the Jewish kingdom!

S. C. Is it then strange that God should begin another kingdom, and that among the tribe of Judah,—a kingdom of grace, love, and mercy, and of heavenly joy, in order to redeem every troubled soul, as it was foretold of the prophets.

W. S. No, I am not astonished that he should; but where is there such a kingdom?

S. C. We will speak of that whenever we have closed the history of this.

W. S. Although it is disagreeable for me to hear so much of human misery related,

yet to follow the chronological order of history, I will listen attentively.

S. C. This Alexander left two sons, one was called Hircanus, the other Aristobulus. Hircanus was made high-priest by the queen, and he favoured the Pharisees. After reigning nine years she died, and then there was a great division between the two sons; Aristobulus waged war against his brother Hircanus, on account of the kingdom, which was the cause (not without the Divine decree) why the sceptre of Judah was given unto the Gentiles, and the final destruction soon followed.

W. S. I would desire to hear some account of that.

S. C. There was a shrewd and designing individual called Antipater, of the Idumeans. When he saw that Aristobulus, contrary to law, was made king, he was not satisfied; he encouraged Hircanus to revolt, and he made a league with Aretas, king of Arabia, who came with a mighty army to Jerusalem, to expel Aristobulus, and besieged him and all his priests in the temple, that it was lamentable to see one brother enraged at another, shooting darts at him and harassing him, and it was still more sorrowful to see them stone Onias to death, and for no other reason than that this man of God would not encourage either faction, but

would rather see them love one another as brothers ought. But God soon showed them by a tremendous hurricane, hail and storm, which destroyed their grain, that he was not pleased with them. And in the mean time, Scarus, a Roman commander in Syria, encouraged the Arabians to withdraw, and thus was Aristobulus set free. As Pompey went down towards Damascus, legates from both parties met him, each desiring him to acknowledge their king ; but because Aristobulus withstood Pompey's army, therefore did he go up against Jerusalem and took possession of the temple, and slew many of the Jews. Some killed each other, others cast themselves down precipices, others were murdered of the Romans, so that about 12,000 were slain ; and Pompey entered the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, which never was done by a strange king. However, he did not destroy any thing in it. And after making Jerusalem and other cities tributary, he led Aristobulus away captive, and Hircanus remained in the office of priest. These were the beginnings of the entire subjugation of the Jews.

W. S. Father, be pleased to tell me how the Romans became to be such a powerful people as to be able to subjugate the Jews ?

S. C. Alas ! they pushed on and devastated all before them as a flood ; for after they had conquered Macedonia and Carthage, as I

told you before, they extended the borders of their kingdom east and west. First they vanquished and slew Jugurtha, the king of Numidia, afterwards Marius conquered the Cimbri. Sertorius invaded Spain, and thus they conquered nation after nation ; so that there was none to be found of the posterity of Antiochus, or of Alexander the Great. Julius Cæsar was successful in the east, and made France, Germany, Belgium, and England tributary to Rome ; and thus was the fourth great monarchy commenced, after the third was destroyed, according to the prophecy of Daniel.

W. S. You have told me enough of the Romans ; be kind enough to tell me more concerning your own nation.

S. C. Be it known to you, my son, that the city of Jerusalem met with some other calamities. As Crassus, a Roman general, went to war with the Parthians (remaining enemies), he pillaged the temple of all the gold which Pompey had left. He took a beam of gold of 300 pounds weight. After Pompey was slain of Julius Cæsar, Antipater, whom we mentioned before, prevailed upon the emperor to confirm Hircanus in the office of high-priest, and to appoint him prefect or governor of the Jews. And he made his children, Phaselis, Herod, and others to be prefects, and purchased himself friends with the Jews' money. On his death, his son Herod

and his brother were declared tetrarchs by Mark Antony. At this time the above mentioned Aristobulus was dead, leaving a son called Antigonus, who obtained an army from the king of Parthia, by promising him 1000 talents and 500 women. With these foreign troops he attacked his country, and cut the ears of Hircanus, to make him unfit for the priesthood.* My son, if you had seen the misery that was in Jerusalem at this time, it was enough to have moved the hardest heart; some adhered to Antiochus, others to Hircanus and Herod. Banners were extended, and drums beating; all the citizens were dreadfully alarmed, not knowing who was first to be slain. The royal palace, of which the remains are yet to be seen, was stormed; arrows were flying as thick as hail. The sorest battle was fought on a market day. Antigonus was driven into the temple; and several houses, which were garrisoned by Herod, were set on fire; and it being on the day of Pentecost, several thousand people from the country made Herod retire into the royal palace; who, however, sallied forth and slew many of the enemies. In the mean time came the Parthian general with his horsemen, and pretending friendship, he proposed to be mediator, and thereby took Hircanus and Phaselis by surprise; but Herod effected

* See *Josephus* 14. *Dion and Plutarch in Anton.—Trans.*

his retreat, and went into Arabia, from thence he went through Egypt to Rome, and left Antigonus the kingdom. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of the patriarch, Jacob, who prophesied, 1700 years before, that the sceptre should depart from Judah. Gen. xlix. 10. For when Herod came to Rome for assistance, he was made king over Judea, which happened 500 years after the Babylonian captivity, after the tribe of Asmonen (of whom Mattathias was the first) had reigned 130 years.

W. S. Then it was time that the promised hero should make his appearance.

S. C. O, yes ; the Hero, who conquered ALL, yet not with missile weapons, but by truth, which is all prevailing.

W. S. But how did Herod become king of the Jews ?

S. C. Not without shedding much blood, so my parents told me, who saw the whole of it. The country was filled with misery and wretchedness ; the Parthians and Antigonus had laid waste all around Jerusalem ; Galilee was plundered and ransacked of murderers, who laid in caves ; the borders thereof were lined with soldiers. In the mean time came Herod with a host from Rome, prowling the whole country, and took cities at his will. However, he was successfully repulsed from Jerusalem, until Sosius, a Roman commander, aided him ; then he besieged Jerusalem again, and stormed it by force. The Jews

who fought under Antigonus's banner, resisted Herod manfully ; but Herod succeeded in storming the city, and took possession of it. The Roman soldiers ran through the city like infuriated lions, slaying all before them, saving neither man, woman, nor child. The drums and the groans of the dying made a doleful noise ; even Herod, who was as cruel as death, was so affected by the scene of carnage, that he immediately put an end to the shedding of blood. But poor Antigonus, although he fell down upon his knees supplicating for mercy, was bound and led down and brought before Antony, who beheaded him, at the request of Herod. Thus you see that Herod purchased the crown by shedding much blood.

W. S. To rule but a short time in this life is paid too dear at the price of blood.

S. C. He had no peace during his whole reign, besides being in jeopardy of life himself, on account of Cæsar Augustus (his friend Antony being conquered), and on account of his own subjects. Besides all this, he was in continual dread and fear ; for he knew that the Jews despised him, because he was not their legitimate king according to the flesh ; and therefore did he make the attempt to extirpate the descendants of Asmonen. He did not even save his own wife, Mariamne, neither her mother, Alexandra, nor her brother Aristobulus, nor the aged

Hircanus, who used his influence in his behalf; neither did he suffer the children of Alexandra and Aristobulus to live; yea, while he was dying, he ordered Antipater to be executed. It appears that every thing was ominous of the shortness of his reign, and that there was another king to rise; so that he did not prevent any kind of cruelty. Whenever he heard the least rumour of a king, he quaked and feared greatly; he had his spies throughout all the land, inquiring whether there was not a snare laid for him; and that there might be a king of the Jews born, as he apprehended there would be. With all his precaution and cunning, he was deceived at last; for the wisdom of God took him in his own craftiness. He expected this king would be born of the Asmoneans; but he was of the tribe of Judah: he looked for him to be of the noble, but he was of the ignoble. He was of the poor. It is presumption to fight against God.

W. S. You have told me more of a tyrant than of a king; and I clearly learn from your discourse that it is now the time when, according to God's appointment, such a king should be born as He had promised long beforehand; and I have a great desire to hear the history thereof; but I will not weary you any longer at the present. It is true the day is not near closed; but I will rather go a little sooner, in order that you may refresh

yourself, and be the better prepared in the morning to relate to me that very important history.

S. C. Your observations are correct, my son, go in peace, and reflect upon what you have heard.

W. S. I hope to do so.

DIALOGUE V.

[THE THIRD PART OF THIS DIALOGUE COMPRISES A PERIOD OF SEVENTY YEARS, IN WHICH THE LIFE OF CHRIST AND THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES ARE RELATED, UNTIL THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.]

Simon Cleophas. I WOULD have invited you to another place; but as this is the most elevated, and may be to our advantage to view the city and the surrounding country, therefore did I select this; otherwise my house would have been at your service.

W. S. I certainly would not wish a better place than this; what is there to interrupt us? We have a fine shade here, a pleasant place to sit, and can see all around us; besides, we have many things in our view serving as mementos. I can tell you of a truth, that I have been much edified by what I heard yesterday. It appears to me what I heard is

constantly revolving in my mind ; and I am exceedingly anxious to hear what you have yet to relate ; because one without the other is not perfect.

S. C. You have said the truth. But on what part have you been reflecting last ; so that I may know where to begin ?

W. S. Besides many other things, I am astonished to hear you say that Herod was deceived in his own wisdom : that this prince was born without him knowing it ! Did this take place so secretly, wholly unknown to the people ?

S. C. As unknown as the manna in the desert ; for when it was fallen, none knew what it was. So it was with this birth. It was for a considerable time secretly reported that there was a remarkable child born of a priest, of whom they entertained the highest opinion. This report was circulated through all the land ; but his parents being of no note, the report was but little regarded.

W. S. Was this the child that was expected ?

S. C. By no means. However, his birth is something remarkable and more than ordinary ; for every one knew how the father had been dumb for nine months, and could not speak till this child was born ; and when the child was eight days old, his mouth was opened, his tongue loosened, and he spake and praised God. Luke i. 20-64. This child was also the more glorious because his advent

was foretold nearly 400 years before. The hearts of many that were touched by the finger of God, rejoiced in the glorious hope that this luminous morning star should rise before the glorious rays of the bright sun. This was known only to those who feared God, who mourned and sighed under the reproachful cross of persecution ; for the court of Herod and the mighty of the land were engaged with secular matters, rejoicing in the vanities of the world, drinking each others' health. Their minds were filled with vain imaginations concerning their prosperity and power ; boasting of their good standing with the Romans, mocking and laughing at the conversation of the common people, who would often speak of a coming Saviour, whom they expected with much anxiety. Some looked for him to come from the tribe of David, because the prophets had said much concerning him ; others thought it presumptuous to look for a Saviour to come from a tribe that was nearly extirpated. The scribes themselves saw that the prophecies were accomplishing ; but they were blinded through jealousy with a desire to govern, so that it appears their discernment in these matters was blunted ; and the divisions of them into sects, such as Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, contributed much to the neglect of observing the times ; each sect courting the king's favour, who artfully

availed himself of their dissensions, and took the advantage of them, and oppressed them severely : he made them pay dear for their anticipated favours by depriving them of all liberty. Thus had the clouds of ignorance darkened their minds so much, that they could not discern the truth, so as to have a well-grounded hope of those things that were reported. There were two very pious and godfearing persons of the tribe of David, who were in low circumstances ; one was called Joseph, of a noble family, though a carpenter by occupation ; he was betrothed to a pious young woman called Mary ; she was related to the mother of the aforementioned child : both were very pious, and lived in the fear of God. It is not to be fully related how much time they spent in spiritual conversations, examining the prophecies, which caused them often to sigh to see the divine promises so little regarded, and much neglected ; appearing as though all the hopes and expectations of the secluded and pious were frustrated ; of those who convened secretly by night for fear of being apprehended by the spies of this tyrant. In the mean time, God, regardless of the opposition of man, sent His holy angel to make known the birth of Jesus, to the aforementioned Mary ; but she did not make it public ; although she was much troubled in mind, she only revealed it secretly to her friend, her whom I mentioned before.

Their joys are not to be expressed; whole nights did they spend in meditating on the wondrous ways of God.

W. S. I am astonished to hear that all were so benighted by the thick clouds of ignorance, and that there was nothing to dispel this gloom! Did it continue long thus?

S. C. The mighty of the land were still in darkness, every one regarding his own interest; one to promote his honour; another to have his children provided with offices; a third was engaged in mercantile business; some attending to agriculture. All were rejoicing on account of the universal peace then prevailing. It was reported from Italy, that the doors of the temple of Janus were closed, that there was nothing to molest, and none thought of a change. About six months afterwards it was reported by some shepherds, that some angels appeared to them by night, while they were watching their flocks, commanding them to go to Bethlehem. Luke ii. 8-17. You can see the village from this; it is south of us, about six miles from here, near the tower called Eder. These shepherds could scarce relate all concerning the melody, the joy, they heard from the angels. It appeared to them as if heaven itself was open to them: not all the music of the world was to be compared with that heavenly music. And as they had come to Bethlehem, they found an amiable and an

exceedingly fair woman with a child in a manger, and with her was also an agreeable, well-deported man, but apparently of ordinary circumstances. He was of the tribe of David; and this, my son, was the long-promised child.* This report was made generally known by the shepherds. Some believed it, and others not. I well recollect when my father, Cleophas, came home with this report from the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem, for I was about eleven years old at that time, and I do recollect it well, although more than one hundred years have elapsed since.

W. S. You excite my curiosity more and more. How did it happen that they came to Bethlehem; were they on a visit to their relations?

S. C. By no means; they were persons of very little property. Joseph was a carpenter.

* It appears about the time our Saviour was born, that not only the Jews and Samaritans expected some distinguished personage, but the heathens looked for such a person at the same time. Virgil, one of the Roman poets, is supposed to describe some great person who was to be born about this time; and he does it in such language that is near or very agreeable to the description given of the Messiah's kingdom by the Jewish prophet.

Suetonius, a Roman writer, says that there was one Julius Marathus declared, "That nature was about to bring forth a king for the people." He says also, in the life of Vespasian, "That there had prevailed over all the eastern part of the world a constant opinion, that about that time there should come out of Judea, one who should obtain the empire of the world." Tacitus, another Roman historian, says the same thing, and "That it was contained in the ancient books of the Jewish priests, so that both Jews and Gentiles expected now some glorious person to arise in the world."—*Trans-*

ter by trade, but they came hither in obedience to a mandate of Cæsar Augustus, who had decreed to tax or register all the world; and Joseph being of the house of David, went up with Mary his espoused wife to be registered, and at that time she brought forth her son (through a remarkable providence of God), so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. This happened in the thirty-fourth year of the reign of Herod, and in the forty-first of Augustus, and in the 607th year after the Babylonian captivity. The seventy weeks of Daniel had been accomplished; and thus the more informed could not but conclude that the deliverance of Israel was at hand. Although the mighty of the land were enshrouded in thick darkness, still there were some rays of the great sun visible, and the morning star was already to be seen above the horizon. The report of the shepherds of Bethlehem was little regarded, and in about six weeks a similar report was made by one Simeon, who resided at Jerusalem, and at the same time by a prophetess called Hanna; they said that they saw the child in the temple, and, through the spirit of prophecy, they believed him to be the Redeemer of Israel, and their report was gladly received by many; and this old man then departed this world in peace, telling many remarkable things of the child.

W. S. Was this reported to king Herod?
2 A

S. C. Every one was afraid to say any thing to him, dreading his wrath. However, he soon heard something of it, and was considerably troubled, but he did not know what measures to adopt in relation thereto; for on account of the domestic feuds and commotions in his own house, he could not so very closely observe all things, for both at Rome and at his own house were persons enraged at his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, whom he brought before a court of two hundred and fifty counsellors assembled for that purpose at Beritha, a city about thirty miles from Jerusalem; and after a protracted meeting, and having heard many heavy charges preferred against them, sentence was pronounced on them by two, namely, Saturnius and Valumnius, that they should be executed; and they were accordingly led into Samaria, and executed. Thus you see that this tyrant had enough at home to engage his attention; therefore, he could pay but little attention to the common reports of plebeians.

W. S. O, the wonderful and secret ways of the Lord!

S. C. About one year afterwards there was another report of the new-born king. Several wise men came from Persia, who were well versed in the books of the prophets, especially in the prophecy of Daniel. These being excellent astronomers, saw a new star

arise in the land of Judea, which they followed with their men and maid-servants, camels and asses, and came into Jerusalem, inquired of king Herod where the new-born king of the Jews was. Matt. ii. 2. When the old man heard this, he was sore afraid, and appeared to be quite deranged, dreading disastrous consequences. Although some would have rejoiced to see a revolution, especially they who were not pleased with Herod's reign, he congregated his council immediately: all the high-priests and scribes were assembled, and any one endowed with the gift of interpreting was admitted into the council, and after closely examining the books, it was found that he was to be born at Bethlehem. Matt. ii. 5, 6. Herod concealed his inveterate anger, flattered the wise men, and sent them into Bethlehem with a view thus to gain some information of the child, and feigned that he also was desirous of honouring the child. Matt. i. 7, 8. But when the wise men, being divinely inspired, had honoured the child, and presented him gold and spices, they left Herod ignorant of the infant, and by Divine command returned home through Arabia. They did not mind the parching sandy road, but they entertained one another by each one relating how he was pleased with the child, and how amiable his mother was, and how great the special providence of God was towards them. All these things

strengthened them in their faith, so that they did not repent having made a journey, going and coming, of at least 500 miles.

W. S O, what a remarkable wonder, that God should make known the birth of this child in such a distant country !

S. C. Signs were seen in the east and west ; for in the Capitolium at Rome all the images had fallen down : the image Apollo, the oracle at Delphos, refused to answer Augustus Cæsar, saying that the Hebrew child would soon make him hold his peace. As soon as Augustus arrived at home, he had an altar erected in the Capitolium, in honour of the first-born Son of God ; and he refused after that to be called *Dominus* or *Lord*, although his people knew not at that time why it was thus : yet experience taught all that the *LORD* of *lords* had been born.

W. S. You ascribe a very high title to this child.

S. C. Yes, indeed, my son ; he deserves none less ; He it is who was provided, and promised of God, from all eternity, of whom Adam and Noah told you that he would come ; and he was expected in every age since the days of Adam ? He is the Preserver, the Redeemer, the Mediator of the whole world ; of whom all the prophets have spoken, and in whom all Israel confided.

W. S. I understand that He is the same for the sake of whom you often wept.

S. C. Alas ! the chosen lamb of God—the innocent—

W. S. Father, you have entered upon an intricate history, for your sighing shows it; however, it is more edifying to preserve some order. I have to put another question before you proceed.

S. C. The innocent lamb that was slain in this city, on account of which this judgment which you see was brought upon all the Jews. You will understand the whole by contemplating his origin ; He was not only the Son of David, but he was the only-begotten Son of God, who has no other father than God, born of a virgin, by the influence of the Holy Ghost. O, son, his being is incomprehensible, and his birth not fully to be related. How can the limited conception of man comprehend him who had no beginning, who is the eternal WORD himself ? But his brightness and operations, which were made to testify of his divine image, appeared to us, and of those we may speak.

W. S. You are telling me great wonders ! But I return to Herod. How did he behave when the wise men did not return to him again ?

S. C. His gray hairs stood mountain-ward for anger, his eyes sparkled as a flame, his countenance was distorted, and, like the infernal fiend, he called his satellites, who were soon collected, with pikes, missile weapons,

and shields : and because he did not know the house in which Joseph and Mary, with the child, were, he issued a decree, not only to kill all the children in Bethlehem, but of all the surrounding country, from two years old and under, thinking by having this cruel decree executed, that he would make sure of killing the new-born king. But God ordered it all wisely ; Joseph was warned by an angel in a dream, to take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt ; he obeyed, passed on through the wilderness into Egypt, till he arrived in Thermopolis.

W. S. O, how sorrowful must the mothers in Bethlehem and the surrounding country have been, when they saw these troops come.

S. C. Their sorrow cannot be described. At first it was not known what Herod intended to do, whether he intended to wage war against the Arabians, or whether he had something else in view ; but it was soon disclosed when his satellites began to kill the innocent children most barbarously. Then did mothers weep and wail, falling down and imploring mercy for their children ; some offered to die in the stead of their children ; but all this was of no avail ; for the king's decree must be executed. Some were determined upon fleeing, but this was also useless ; for the roads and streets were all completely guarded, so that none could escape. Even some of the king's own children were slain

lest the new-born king should escape ; and how could those of low degree escape ? The mothers, thus seeing their innocents weltering in gore, were not to be dissuaded from weeping most bitterly, and lamenting the loss of their children ; and hence was fulfilled what Rachel, who is buried here, saw with prophetic eye in her expiring moments, when she bore Benjamin ; saying, “ This is the son of my sorrow.”*

W. S. He must have been a cruel tyrant. It is astonishing that the Jews could endure such a king !

S. C. What could they do ? they were hardened. Besides, he was very assiduous in improving the country, and routing and destroying the murderers in Galilee, who were secreted in the caves and clefts of rocks. He provided the people with corn in times of dearth ; he even pledged his own jewels, and rebuilt some of the cities ; for instance, the city of Sebasta, formerly called Samaria, which was in the centre of a fertile valley, the lands of which he improved very highly. He also built Cesarea on the seashore, which was called the tower of Stratonis : this city he adorned and improved much in honour of Cæsar. He also built Antipatris, in honour of his father, and many other splendid buildings and cities did he improve. Especially

* She called his name Ben-oni, which, being interpreted, is, “ Son of my sorrow.” See Gen. xxxv. 18.—*Trans.*

did he build the splendid and magnificent temple, the ruins of which are yet to be seen. He commenced building it in the 18th year of his reign ; and the one which was built by Zerobabel five hundred years ago, he tore down. He built it of white marble stone, as may be seen at the ruins thereof ; 10,000 first-rate carpenters, and 1000 priests laboured at it for eight years ; and finished all completely, except some of the wing-works, which required many years' labour. He also built a strong tower in honour of Antonius, the remains of which are yet to be seen north of us. By thus erecting many splendid edifices, he made himself numerous friends and adherents. The land which was waste he improved ; for, as you see, it is planted over with vineyards, olive-trees, fig-trees, pomegranates, oranges, lemons, citrons, and other fruit trees. Every thing flourished in the reign of Herod, and hence it was that his reign was tolerable.

W. S. From your discourse, I perceive that he was a good earthly king, but little endowed with heavenly wisdom.

S. C. Alas, he was far from being endowed with divine wisdom. He was like all those who prefer earthly things to heavenly. On the contrary, the heavenly king regarded not the things of this world : he was now in Egypt with his despised parents as a pilgrim ; yet he did not want for heavenly

music ; the angels who were around him, their Lord, made him more happy than king Herod was in the midst of all his musicians, his wine, and his sycophants ; for he was severely punished afterwards.

W. S. Father, you are telling me wonders. I am anxious to hear more of Herod.

S. C. The divine vengeance followed him immediately, for the heir of his kingdom, Antipater, made one attempt to poison him. The court trembled and quaked for fear and despair, and Antipater was cast into prison. A sore disease was inflicted upon Herod ; his bowels fell out, and he stank like a carion ; at last he made an attempt upon his own life. When Antipater was apprized of this, he rejoiced, thinking that he would soon be released, but he was executed ; and thus, he that deprived so many mothers of their children, had to see, in his expiring moments, some of his own children die ; and instead of destroying, as he thought he would, the son of God, his own son fell a victim. Herod suffered most excruciatingly, and died in the 37th year of his reign, when Jesus was three years old.

W. S. Thus the country was delivered from a great tyrant.

S. C. That is true ; but not altogether delivered from tyranny.

W. S. Do you say so, father ?

S. C. Yes, it is certainly so; for when Archelaus, Herod's son, was about succeeding to the throne, he did not meet with little difficulties. There were some for usurping the throne, because he was at Rome; some were for pilfering Herod's treasures; others interfered to prevent all this; others again were for revolutionizing the whole government; in short, there was a general alarm. On a certain Easterday, when there was a great uproar raised against Archelaus, and the stones were thrown as thick as hail upon his soldiers, there were no less than 300 Jews killed; and afterwards on the day of Pentecost (my son, I recollect it well, for I was about fourteen years old at the time), the temple and the king's palace flowed with blood; for Sabinus made an attempt to take the king's treasure and the sacred money, but the common people interfered to prevent him from it. The tower of Phaselus (some of its ruins remain to this day) was besieged, and after considerable bloodshed, set on fire, which caused a general consternation. Some thrust themselves into the fire; others put an end to themselves; others, again, made their escape, so that the city was completely filled with misery, till Varus, the Roman proconsul, put an end to the uproar. In the mean time Archelaus came from Rome; however, he had less dominion than his father, for he only

had Judea and Samaria under his jurisdiction ; the other parts of the kingdom being divided among his brothers.

W. S. But how did the child in Egypt fare ?

S. C. He was from his infancy an agreeable child ; every one who saw him was astonished at him. The citizens of Thermopolis would have been much pleased to have always had such company as that of Joseph and Mary ; but as soon as Joseph was apprized by an angel of the death of Herod, he and his beloved, with their blessed son, made ready to go up to Bethlehem, but having understood that Archelaus was no less tyrannical than his father, he, therefore, went into Galilee, where Antipas reigned, and abode in Nazareth.

W. S. Thus they made a long and tedious journey.

S. C. This you may readily imagine ; for leaving Thermopolis, and travelling through the warm country of Egypt, and passing through Palusium, and onward till they arrived in Galilee, at Nazareth, they had travelled rising of one hundred miles.

W. S. The neighbours must have been astonished to see Joseph and Mary return after several years' absence.

S. C. Their neighbours did not know what was the cause of their absence ; neither did they know that they had fled into Egypt, for Jesus was born among men, as a pearl

among a huge pile of stones. The murdering of the children at Bethlehem and the adjacent places was generally known, but none knew the cause of it. Things divine are not so closely examined as earthly things; therefore it was that Archelaus did discharge the high-priest, Joaza, and ordained that Eliazar should take his place; and he also married Glaphira, his brother's widow, when Herod Antipas was made deputy governor of Galilee, and Lysias of Bilana. The like, and many other charges of this kind, were preferred against Archelaus at Rome, and all were closely examined; but nothing was said of Jesus and his parents. At that time I was about fifteen years of age, and I well recollect what transpired then, for my native town, Emaus, was burnt at that time by the soldiers of Varus; and many other things could be related that happened then, which are all recorded in the chronicles of that day. I do not recollect that there was any rumour made on account of Joseph, Mary, or Jesus; thus little do people regard things that are of more importance than all besides. About trifles there is much ado.

W. S. Notwithstanding, those who lived with and about them, observed more than common things in them.

S. C. I acknowledge this, for Mary was in her habits, manners, dress, conversation, and in all other things, a pattern of virtue. She

being my mother's sister, I knew her very well; she had an honourable, decent deportment, and as to person she was middling tall, her countenance was fair, her hair was yellowish, her eyes handsome, her lips ruby, she spoke little, was humble in her dress, mild, and without levity. In short, all that is desirable in a well-behaved, holy, and devout woman, was found in her. Her husband, also, was a man of good manners, honourable, and besides being a labourer he was also very pious; although he had to maintain himself with his saw and hatchet, he would not, like other carpenters, study to enrich himself, but how to please God, and to keep his commandments. As he was of the same disposition of his consort, they would never let one festival pass by, without going to Jerusalem, regardless of their temporal concerns or the expense they had to incur, so that none of them would be wanting before the Lord, but that every one, like themselves, might do the will of God. On account of these virtues, their neighbours and acquaintances were fully convinced of their piety, and were astonished at them; yet they did not take it to heart as they ought to have done.

W. S. I wish I had known so lovely a company, and particularly the child Jesus, for I desire to hear something concerning him also.

S. C. I assure you that should I even spend much time, I would not be able to tell you enough of the virtues of that child. From his very infancy he was so devout and zealous, that it was astonishing to see him ; his whole mind seemed to be always engaged in heavenly things ; and after he could walk, he was obedient to his parents, and did their will with such diligence, that even they were astonished at him. Every one who saw him exclaimed, " What a fine child this is ! how obliging, mild, lovely, and prepossessing ; he is not like other children, who play in the streets, full of vanity." No jeering, which youths are often prone to, was to be observed in him, nor lying or deception, in which other young children delight ; nothing blameable was to be found in him ; but in words and deeds, as well as in appearance and deportment, he seemed to be without an equal. O unequalled pearl of youth, well worthy to be loved ! We read of Moses, that he was a fair child, of Isaac, that he was devout in prayer, of Joseph, that his father loved him above every thing ; but I do not believe that they surpassed this child, for all the gifts of nature seemed to have centred in him. Verily, he blossomed like a rose in a field, among other children. O how fortunate are the parents of such a child ! But what signified all this ; being poor, they were not noticed. What is a carpenter ?

Were he a priest or another rich citizen, the wisdom of such a son might be of service; but it is to be feared that little will result therefrom. These and the like words were uttered by some when they saw Jesus, yet they knew little of the mysteries of God. This, however, was not at all surprising, for Mary and Joseph themselves, although instructed, did not fully comprehend the true nature of the mysteries of God, which were exhibited in a wonderful and memorable way.

W. S. I long to hear of that.

S. C. When Jesus was about twelve years of age (in the eighth year of the reign of Archelaus), and Joazar being high-priest at Jerusalem, he, according to custom, went with his parents to the feast of the passover, and remained there secretly while they returned home. This, however, he did not of curiosity, or to see the market, the pedlers, or juggling, like other youths; but he went into the temple to see what was done there. There came to him the learned rabbis, old grey-headed men, high-priests and Pharisees, who sat down and commenced conversing on divine things. Jesus, to the great surprise of those that saw him, joined himself to them in a becoming manner. The books were opened, they commenced to read, to question, and to dispute. Jesus listened to all this. At last he proposed some important

question to those old men ; but how quickly all eyes were directed towards him ; one said, " Who is this ?" the other, " What think you of the youth ?" After they had put some questions to him, and had received wise and judicious answers, they were greatly amazed, and acknowledged that they had never heard the like of a youth ; but they were still more astonished when they saw with what understanding the young lad was endowed. And after they had placed him in their midst, in order that they all might have an opportunity to see the pleasing display of his understanding, Joseph and Mary returned, after having sought him for three days, not knowing what had become of him. Mary seemed to be somewhat displeased that Jesus had done so without permission ; but Jesus soon satisfied her ; and said, " That he had to see to the things belonging to his Father ;" and, although he was, by parity of reasoning, not obliged to rise, he went, met his parents, and was obedient to them, left the company honourably, and thus leaving them a specimen of his wisdom ; however, Joseph and Mary did not understand the divine mysteries ; yet they were very happy of the company of such a child, and forgot all their former sorrow, till they at last, while contemplating what had passed, approached the hill on which Nazareth was situated, which was surrounded by a fertile country, fine towns, and

splendid palaces, the most of which are now destroyed.

W. S. I feel inclined to inquire about the causes of this war ; but my heart is so much transported with the pleasing narrative of Jesus, that I must first hear the end of that. Now, as you say that this Jesus was the Son of the most high God, did he still remain in the service of his parents ? and was he not sent to school, in order to become a noted man ? Because it was not becoming for such a distinguished youth to spend his time in doing such work as his father was obliged to do.

S. C. O, son, you must know that it was not necessary for the wisdom of God to resort to any such means as were found among men. No one could increase the spirit of God, with which Jesus filled, by any instruction, nor could it be diminished by bodily labour. For the Pharisees, it was necessary to have their books always before them ; but Jesus wanted none, because the root and fountain of wisdom was in him ; this he possessed to the astonishment of every one ; grown up in him naturally, like a tree. Although he served his parents obediently, he did not labour so much as to neglect the works of God, nor was he idle, in order not to make it appear as if he wished to escape the common burden ; but to set a good example to all, he gave both to body and spirit due

attention, and behaved in such a manner so that every one who saw him was astonished at the wisdom and grace that shone forth in him.

W. C. I perceive from your narration, that although Jesus was famous, he was not noticed by the great, and that neither Archelaus, nor his brother Antipas, suspected him to be the new-born king.

S. C. That is true ; because on account of the inequality between Jesus and the nobility, of whom they had to be afraid. He was never seen with any weapons, or in any strange costume, nor did he keep company with those of the courts of the great : he was never seen in taverns, or in public theatres, nor was it ever known that he flattered the Pharisees, Sadducees, or men of distinction, or courted their favour, as is often done by those wishing to become great. Therefore, Archelaus had no reason to be afraid of him. But he had other enemies, who drove him from his throne ; for after he had reigned but ten years, he was impeached before Cæsar, who sent him, as supposed, into France, and made him miserable ; and afterwards sent Cyrenus, the governor, who sold Archelaus's possession, and taxed the country the second time, which created no small disturbance ; for one Judas of Galilee, born at Gamala, resisted this taxation, and had much people on his side ; but he was finally killed after

much bloodshed ; yet his sect left a root of dissension, which made us afterwards much uneasiness, and the governors, Coponius, Marcus, and Amnus Rufus, each of whom reigned two years in succession, were also greatly troubled by them. Oh ! son, the changes to which this country always was subject made it unhappy. Augustus, the emperor, also died about the same time, and Tiberias succeeded him, who immediately sent hither Gratus as governor, who discharged Ananias from the office of high-priest, and appointed one Ishmael in his stead ; afterwards he rejected him, and appointed Eleazar, the son of Ananias, for one year ; after him, he appointed Simon, the son of Canuthus, and after he had officiated for one year, Joseph Caiaphas was made high-priest. O, this Caiaphas !

W. S. Father, are you tired of your narration, or has this man done you any harm, because you weep ?

S. C. He recalls to my memory a great and grievous time, the cause of which you will hear by and by. Further, after this Gratus had reigned eleven years, he was called home, and Pontius Pilate was sent to take his place. During his time there were contentions and dissensions, because he sent the emperor's flag with his bust into this city, contrary to the laws of the Jews, which caused many to go to Cæsar, and entreated

him to quit that practice; yet when he threatened them with death, and they still persisted in their course, he finally granted their petition, but had them afterwards killed with clubs, and caused a great massacre among the people. His appearance therefore was not acceptable to us, and vastly different from that of the son of David, who was now twenty-six years of age, and secretly led a holy life at Nazareth. O, how blessed were the fields through which he journeyed, the cities in which he prayed, and how much more blessed were those who saw and heard him—who received his salutary doctrines, and to whom he afterwards revealed himself.

W. S. But how was that?

S. C. O, son, of that wonders are to be told! Do you see two burnt towers towards sunrise? the one a little further off than the other, on the side of which is a high rock, which you can see.

W. S. I see them.

S. C. There is the river Jordan, which divides this from the country which lies on the other side of Jordan: at that place there formerly was a fording, called Bethabara; it was well improved, and in a fine part of the country: at that place wonders were to be seen in the fourth year of Pilate, and in the fifteenth year of Tiberias, the emperor; for there came a holy and devout man, like a rising morning star, called John, who began

to preach : his raiment and manner of living were similar to those of the prophet Elias, of whom I told you before ; for as he was a lineal descendant of the priesthood, and raised in the wilderness, many became attached to him, so that they came unto him from all directions, and the roads were continually crowded with people. I remember it very well, for I was then about forty years of age : it seems to me as if I could still see how devoutly the people adhered to 'him. People who were formerly rude and blasphemous, returned as lambs ; the rigid soldiers became mild ; the avaricious publicans, the harlots, and other wicked persons, seemed to have entirely changed their hearts ; the Pharisees stood confounded and panic-struck, not knowing what to think thereof ; for he baptized all these people in the aforementioned river : they confessed their sins with tears ; while, on the contrary, the doctrine of the Pharisees led few to repentance. Now, as almost every one expected a revolution or change in the kingdom, on account of the confusion, they thought that this John was the Redeemer ; but he confessed that he was only sent to go before him, and that he would now soon come. No one thought of Jesus, the son of Joseph, who, a few days afterwards, came unexpectedly, as one of the least of the disciples, out of Galilee, where he had remained in obscurity, as under a cloud. His behaviour

convinced John that he had baptized one who was more than himself, however humble and reserved he kept himself; when he was baptized, there were signs seen from heaven, which assured us that he was the well-beloved Son of the Father.

W. S. Did he not immediately join himself to the priests, or to the court of Herod, in order to be honoured, and be proposed for king, as his office required?

S. C. O, no; he cared not for the pleasures and joys of this world. He went into a desert, a solitary wilderness, where he was neither comforted by man, nor received any assistance from nature; there he remained forty days and forty nights, fasting. In such dreadful nights, ghosts and evil spirits were found in abundance. But as he was a spiritual king, he withstood the spirits of darkness who tempted him most virulently, and presented all their wicked temptations, in order to conquer him; but they found themselves much mistaken, for they met with such resistance that they had to retreat with shame; afterwards the holy angels came as humble ministers to feed him. O, how blessed are they who refuse to serve the devil, and patiently wait for divine assistance as Jesus did.

W. S. That has been a wonderful king; but I wish to hear you further.

S. C. After that, he again came to John at Jordan. As Jesus was walking along the

shore of the pleasant stream, like an humble, meek lamb, at John's instance, two disciples came to him, John i. 35, who found his company so agreeable, that they informed their companions thereof; for they could not possibly conceal it. They who sought a Messiah could not form any other opinion than that this was the person; his countenance made it known, his deportment showed it: their hearts were attracted by his words, as if drawn by a loadstone, so that he had soon some pious persons collected around him.

W. S. How agreeable to listen to this narration.

S. C. After this occurrence, he went with his disciples thirteen miles through the country, till they at last came to Cana of Galilee. There it was only discovered what powers he possessed; and when he was invited to a wedding with his mother and others, he sat very humble and quiet. When they said that they had no wine, in confusion they looked at one another: there was more sorrowing than means to remedy the want of wine; all was confusion, and even the mother of Jesus was troubled; but Jesus, who did not seem to be concerned, went quietly and changed about six pitchers of water into fine pure wine, to show that he, as the true bridegroom, had come, with a view to make all things better than to make these people drunk with wine. Every one was surprised at the pleasant taste

of it; the report of this miracle circulated quicker than any thing that was ever heard of. John ii. 1-11. Yet he sought no praise in these things, but went away shortly afterwards, and travelled through cities and towns, till he arrived, in the beginning of April, at Jerusalem, and there attended the feast of the passover.

W. S. Did the high-priest receive him with respect?

S. C. Why should they have welcomed him? They would rather never have seen him there, so that their misdeeds would have remained unreproved; for when he came into the temple, he found in one place oxen, in another sheep or doves, and the whole conversation was about selling and purchasing, exchanging money, and a general confusion, to the annoyance of the devout, who had came there to worship. John ii. 13. Jesus, who was inspired with zeal, made a scourge of cords and drove the animals out of the temple, with a noise similar to that of a rushing wind, which shakes the leaves from trees and makes its limbs tremble. All things began to tremble; the strangers became afraid and fled, the tables and the benches of the money-changers were upset, the moneybags were emptied, so that the exchangers scarce knew how to get away quick enough. Some murmured, and seemed astonished that there was more authority shown there than the Roman

soldiers, who stood guard at fort Antonia, would dare to assume ; others were convinced by this time, and believed in him, for it was a proof of his Divine power.

W. S. It is strange that the chief men of the temple, who had much power, did not know how to oppose this !

S. C. You speak the truth ; for trifling causes often occasion great bloodshed ; however, none resisted. He then went into the land of Judea, where he remained and increased the number of his disciples by baptizing, John iii. 22, until November, when John the Baptist was imprisoned by Herod Antipas, Matt. iv. 12 ; for he could not endure it that this pious man should reprove him for his wickedness ; therefore, he imprisoned him in the tower of Macherunthæ, which den of thieves was afterwards a scourge to the Jews. Then Jesus went into Galilee ; and on his way thither, he taught a Samaritan woman and her countrymen, the Sychemites at the well, and told them that it was not necessary to go to Mount Gerizim to worship, but that they should worship and serve God at any place, in spirit and in truth. The disciples were delighted with his doctrines, and were not offended ; in Galilee, they also were well pleased with the signs and wonders he did ; however, his countrymen, although he was faultless, were nevertheless full of envy. Some despised

his common origin, for they well knew his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, friends and relations ; they knew where they resided and what they followed ; all knew that he was unlearned ; others rebuked him for being more favourable to strangers than to them, and to show fully that they altogether disregarded him, they thrust him out of the city, and led him upon a high hill in order to throw him down. This caused a great uproar and confusion among the people ; but before they were aware of it, Jesus had secretly escaped, and left them in their madness, without being able to do any thing.

Luke iv. 29, 30.

W. S. And whither did he go ?

S. C. There is a city at the sea of Galilee, where Jordan empties into it, called Capernaum, which means as much as a handsome town, for it is surrounded by a beautiful country, and at that time there was a considerable trade carried on in it. But the beautiful city, which was exalted to heaven, is now destroyed ; the old walls and ruined buildings would astonish you. But to begin the history :—In that neighbourhood there were many fishermen ; some of John's disciples had also fled thither, who, on account of his imprisonment, were scattered. Jesus, after he had been rejected by the Nazarenes, came to that place also, and as he walked along the sea, he called four of his principal

disciples to him to spread the Gospel more than had been done before. They left their ships and followed him, and immediately he went into the synagogues, cast out devils, and healed the sick. Matt. iv. 18; Mark i. 16. To relate all he did during the two years he lived there would be too tedious for me, yet my heart rejoices at the recollection thereof; for when I had become his disciple, I also walked with him. But it is necessary to adhere to the subject matter, which is, to relate the destruction of that city, and the causes thereof.

W. S. Father, I pray you not to digress from this interesting and pleasing history, for it is certain that the glory of Jesus was still more manifested.

S. C. To gratify you, I will relate a few circumstances which are worthy of notice, and from which you will be able to see what a Divine person he was. I have said that Jesus dwelled at Capernaum, and afterwards travelled with his disciples through that country into the wilderness, and ascended the mountains. O, if I think of Mount Tabor! how often he prayed on it, how often he preached on it, and how many sick he healed there! how many agreeable hours we spent with him! It seems to me as if I could still see all those things before me, although eighty years have elapsed since. I recollect, O son, how we once travelled

through all Galilee ; through the cities Bethsaida, Jamnia, Sephorim, Magdala, Cesarea, Philippi, Cana, Joppa, Cemerom, Cethron, Saffa, Bufia, and other towns. In all these places he taught, and healed the sick, which was soon reported in all the ten cities, Matt. iv. 23, 24, 25, lying on the other side of Jordan, namely, Chorazin, Gamalia, Julia, Gadara, Astaroth, Jabes, Mizpa, Edrei, Ramath, Pela, and all along Jordan towards Jerusalem, and also on the other side throughout all Syria, namely, Tyre, Sidon, Tripolis, Damascus, Apamea, Selucia, and thence to Antioch. The people that came from all directions were innumerable. Some carried their sick on beds and biers ; others came on crutches. All was alive with people, who cried out from afar off, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on us!" But when the multitude followed him, he ascended the mountain and taught them. Matt. v. 66, 67. We, who followed, saw how the streets were crowded with people. The place was pleasant, beautifully green, the trees affording a pleasant shade, parasoling the rays of the sun ; besides, we were perfectly secure from the press of the crowd. His doctrine and preaching filled our ears, and moved our hearts. All who heard him were astonished at his pleasing words, because they had so great an influence on the hearts, entirely different from those of the scribes and Phari-

sees, who, as scholars, ornamented their doctrines with fair words. After having ministered the word, he healed the sick, and particularly a leper, who, as he descended the mountain, fell down at his feet. Matt. viii 1, 2, 3.

W. S. Astonishing doings!!

S. C. He did not only command the sick, but also wind and water; for at one time we had gone into a ship, and suddenly the heavens were spread over with dark clouds, and a tempestuous storm arose on the sea; it was so boisterous that there seemed to be no hopes for our lives, the waves dashed against the ship, the sails could not be managed, the ropes broke, the mainmast was bent frightfully, and all of us much troubled. At last, we, in this distress, awakened Jesus, who lay quietly and slept; he rose, and stood before us like the father of a family when he reproves his blustering servants. The winds seemed to fear him, the clouds disappeared, the sea immediately became calm, the sails hung down by the sides of the masts, the stars appeared in the serene heavens, Orion, the Wagon, the Seven Stars, and the Twins, were seen directly over head; and I well recollect how much we were astonished, and what he did in that country. He made some deranged and raving persons so tame in one moment, that they were like lambs, to the

great astonishment of all those who lived in that neighbourhood. Matt. viii. 23-28.

W. S. Were it not for your age and experience, as a witness of these things, I would be ready to doubt what you say to be true.

S. C. I know that it is almost impossible to believe the great and unheard-of miracles; but I omit many things which would not less astonish you; for he also raised the dead, Matt. ix. 19, in a word, cured old chronic diseases, under which many had suffered for twelve, eighteen, thirty, and more years, Luke xiii. 11. John v. 5: that was all the same to him, for even those, who, with a believing heart, touched the hem of his garment, were healed without entreating him to do so, so great a virtue proceeded out of him. The afflicted followed him everywhere, into houses, ships, fields, wildernesses, yea, wherever he went, they were about him, so that often no time was afforded him to eat, sleep, or to be alone for private meditation. The cry that Jesus of Nazareth would come, that he had been seen at that place yesterday, and would be there on to-morrow, was often heard long before he came to a place, upon which, the lame and blind began to move, each one wished to be there first, and when they could not come to him, the roofs of the houses in which he was were broken open, and the sick let down before him,—so anxious were

many to be healed of their diseases ; and whenever healed, they were also ready to praise God. Mark ii. 3. Oh ! how often have I seen the lame run, the blind look up towards heaven, those who were afflicted with gout walk, and the sick stand in astonishment, on account of the great deeds.

W. S. All this is very interesting to hear ; by your talk, I perceive, that you have not been among the people at all times ; but often troubled with him alone.

S. C. Oh ! in that you speak the truth. I could almost weep for joy, when I remember the agreeable journeys we had with him. Sometimes we went upon a mountain, then into an open green field, through vineyards, through olive-groves, along the banks of fine clear streams, often through thick forests, and the high cedar-trees sheltered us from the winds and rain. The palm and lemon-trees protected us from the burning rays of the sun ; the cypress-trees refreshed us by their fragrant smell. Often we found nothing but thorns and thistles ; in one field we saw one ploughing and another sowing seed ; in another, a shepherd watched his flock ; but Jesus knew how to profit by all things we saw ; yea, I do not believe that Solomon ever knew the nature of all things as well as Jesus ; for he could speak of all things before the people,—of trees, herbs, grain, vineyards, mustard, even of fishes, birds, of nets, pearls

stones, mountains. In short, he was familiar with every thing ; it seemed as if all were shadows and types of the kingdom of God. He did not look to outward things, nor did he care for them, but alone that the kingdom of God (which continued for ever) might be enlarged : this he always impressed upon our minds, and wished to have it made known to all. He, therefore, also selected twelve of his followers as apostles, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, again to establish that degenerated people. Matt. x. 2. He sent two and two together ; they went through the country in the above-mentioned manner, through cities and towns, and wanted nothing. They had ample time to serve God, and to keep all the cares for this life at a distance. He was not at all concerned about the cares of this world, which are the most injurious poison by which the heart of man can be infected. They had to keep themselves clear from having any thing in store, in order not to be detained on the way.

W. S. But as you were not permitted to have any thing in store, or to care for any such thing, had you not often to be in want ? For I cannot conceive whence you obtained the necessaries of life, as you did not work, nor maintain yourselves by following any secular vocation.

S. C. You will be astonished to hear how miraculously the Lord provided, so that we

had at all times enough to subsist on. It is true, we often had but little or no bread, but then we would eat wild figs, apples, olives, grapes, or such like fruit, which grew abundantly in that country. Often we were invited, by some one or the other, as guests ; and do you see that village towards the south ?

W. S. Yes, I see it.

S. C. That is called Bethany : there resided at that time two devout women, sisters, who were very hospitable and benevolent ; with them we often lodged. I cannot express it, how friendly they treated us ; all they did was for our good, and particularly the one of them, called Martha. In order to serve us, she was concerned about many things ; but it would often have been better for her, like her sister Mary, to have heard the sweet words of Jesus, who never was remiss in giving good advice. But the industry of that woman was not to be disturbed ; it seemed as if she had nothing else to do, than to serve and to provide for us as far as she was able. Mary, on the contrary, considered better things, and always sat at the feet of Jesus, to hear the words of life, which had such an effect upon her soul, that she often wept over her sins ; and with a grateful heart, tasted the grace of God. Such and similar places there were, to which we were invited in a friendly manner ; yea, even by the Pharisees, for many were anxious to hear Jesus

Luke vii. 36, and chap. xi. 27. Besides all this, some women were so careful and ready to serve, that they followed and served us, and prepared for us, so that we never suffered from want. By these and similar opportunities, God sent us the necessaries of life. And what was still more astonishing, we assisted and fed many poor and distressed people ; for Jesus was so merciful and benevolent that wherever he saw one in want, weak or sick, hungry or thirsty, his heart was moved to assist him ; and also of those who seemed as if they did not belong to his people, but followed him to hear his words : these met from 4 to 5000, besides women and children, and were charitably fed by him.

W. S. Stop, father, you speak as if whole ship, wagon, and cart-loads had followed you ; this is perhaps saying too much.

S. C. Not at all ; we had nothing provided ; but fortunately there came a young man who had five loaves and two fishes in his basket, and with these, so large a multitude of men, women, and children were fed.

W. S. Father, you are telling incredible things.

S. C. There are two cities on the seashore of Galilee ; one is called Tiberias, the other Bethsaida (which were at that time still in a flourishing condition) : between both there is a hamlet, and at the same sea a wilderness ; there it was, as I said before, that a multitude

was with him to hear his words. I shall never forget the occasion ; it was in March, a short time before Easter. The landscape all around was lovely to behold, and the fields were decorated with green grass, variegated and interspersed with flowers. About sunset, many seemed to become weak ; the children began to cry, the mothers were fatigued and exhausted, evening approached, and every thing began to wear a gloomy aspect. Jesus sympathized with them, and was anxious to see them fed, and asked advice how to do this. One was for sending them home, another said, that to buy something for the money which we had (which was about 200 pence) would not be of any use among so many. But all these things did not perplex him, because he had different things in view. He told the people to sit down in large companies, of about one hundred and fifty : each one was anxious to see what would take place. He then took the said five loaves and two fishes, looked up towards heaven, thanked his heavenly Father most fervently, broke them, and commanded us to give them to the people. We imagined the bread would soon be consumed ; but however much we gave to the hungry multitudes, who reached for it from all directions to satisfy their hunger, our hands remained as full at one time as at another ; yea, it increased more in our hands ; and more than this, what they handed over

to one another, seemed to increase in every one's hand. This continued till all were fully satisfied, and then there were, to the great astonishment of all present, twelve baskets full of fragments left. One thought of the manna in the wilderness, another of the prophet Elisha, who had done nearly the same thing ; some said this is the prophet of whom Moses spoke. Again, others would make him king, in order that he might release us from the Romans. John vi. 14, 15. In short, every one was excited ; but as night approached, Jesus went away on a mountain to pray.

W. S. There must have been great power in his words.

S. C. That is true ; besides this, he was so friendly, that he gained the hearts of many, for in hearing his words we often forgot eating and drinking. Once it happened, that we made a voyage in the same ship with him, and came to the shore in such a short time, that it was astonishing to all of us ; for at first we had to steer with great difficulty, without getting along at all, he, at the same time stood at the shore, and saw us labour ; he then walked on the sea and came to us. This he did to test our faith, and to see how we would behave ; afterwards he comforted us in our distress, like a father does his dear children, and remained with us. Matt. xiv. 24. Mark vi. 47. John vi. 16.

W. S. I am as much pleased with his

goodness, as I am astonished at his deeds and works!

S. C. He, like a powerful loadstone, drew the hearts of all men to himself. Even the disciples of John came to him about that time, and were afraid, and communicated the melancholy news that John had been put to death by Herod, at Macherunthæ, on account of the false accusations of Herodias, his adulterous wife. Matt. xiv. 3; vi. 17. Herod's court was rejoicing, revelling, dancing, and playing ; but these were full of sorrow. They could hardly tell, for grief, how wickedly the old bawd had put the bloody head of their dear master into a dish for a show, and pierced with her hair-pin his tongue, which had reproved her adulterous life. The recollection of the innocence of their master grieved them much. What did Jesus ? He, in a friendly manner, comforted them, led them into a wilderness, and bid them to rest and comfort themselves.

W. S. That was as a mollient balm for the wounded heart.

S. C. This is true, but it would not do long, for they had again to go amongst the people. Jesus visited many places, to teach and to preach, and to do miracles and signs ; and wherever he went, the people from the cities met him in ships, wagons, carts, and even afoot, according to their several opportunities. They left their trades and busi-

nesses to follow him ; some out of curiosity ; others to receive instruction ; and others to be healed of their infirmities, because nothing was impossible for him. He raised the dead, cleansed the lepers, cast out devils, and knew how to answer every one, in whatever manner they approached him, so that the whole country was full of his deeds.

W. S. What opinion had they of him generally, because he did such great things ?

S. C. They could come to no certain conclusion about him. Some were of the opinion of Pythagoras, that the souls would depart from one body into another, and therefore said that he was John the Baptist ; others, because he did many wonders, said that he was Elias ; and others, because he commanded all earnestly to repent, said he was Jeremiah, or at least one of the old prophets, by whom, in former times, God redeemed and visited his people. But none knew to a certainty who he was.

W. S. His appearance must indeed have been prepossessing, because they compared him with such distinguished persons.

S. C. Touching his person, it was of more than ordinary symmetry and beauty. His appearance was venerable. He was of middle stature. His hair of hazel colour, parted on the crown, as is customary with the Nazarenes ; his beard was also hazel colour, and not very long. His face was smooth and handsome,

without wrinkles or spots ; his cheeks tinted with red. He seldom spoke. When exhorting, he was mild, but zealous in reproofing. He never was seen to laugh, but often weeping. He was free from the passion of anger and malice. In his manners and behaviour, he was so inimitable, that it might well be said, "He was the chief among the sons of men!"

W. S. O, how blessed were the eyes that saw him, and the ears that heard him!

S. C. Yea, those who knew his doings, and learned obedience from him, were still more blessed, for his glory was not of external appearance, for he did not reveal himself to the multitude, but only to his intimate friends, as three of his apostles, namely, Peter, James, and John, have told us ; for at one time they were on Mount Tabor, praying, when his countenance became as bright as the sun, and his raiment exceedingly white and shining ; on both sides there stood two holy persons, namely, Moses and Elias. Matt. xvii. It cannot be expressed what glory and sweet intercourse we had there. O, they wished that it might continue so always ; they never thought of parting ; they were sorrowful when it was over. At that time there was nothing in the world they thought of ; they fancied themselves to be in heaven ; they even thought that in heaven there was no greater perfection of felicity. With tears

they related with what love they were filled towards the saints. O, how they were influenced towards one another! How lovely the voice out of heaven sounded, which testified of Him. Their troubles and sufferings were merely spoken of; but their hearts ceased not to enjoy that inward joy. At last a godly fear seized them, so that they seemed to be quite beside themselves; and that, by the overshadowing of Divine rays, they were now no more astonished at his many signs, but far more that such a divine person should humble himself so much as to be subjected to all this reproach, trials, and sufferings, among the children of men. He did not wish to have this transfiguration known, so that his coming sufferings might, in no manner, be diminished; for so great was his humility. These things they related to us afterwards, for they knew not but that he had gone on the mountain to pray, as he often did, for he often spent whole nights in prayer, and rose early in the morning to attend to acts of devotion in solitude. He also was for a time with us in Galilee, in deserts, and other places; taught and instructed us concerning the things necessary to salvation.

W. S. But did he no more walk in public before the people?

S. C. Certainly, much more so in the last year than ever before. He now wished to dig about the tree and manure it, in hopes

that it would yet bring forth fruit: but he first selected seventy of his disciples, as he had done before with the twelve; for he intended to leave Capernaum, where he had been for two years, and, for the last time, to go through all the country. The doctrines and sermons he preached, and signs and wonders which he did as he travelled, as well as the persecutions he suffered, cannot be fully described.

W. S. Father, it seems to me as if it grieved you to relate this.

S. C. O, when I think of the feast of tabernacles; it was in September, and with us citrons and other fruit were plenty. Jesus kept himself hid for a long time, for there was a great uproar among the people. Some, who had heard his useful doctrines and saw his miracles, said that he was the very Christ, for otherwise it would not be possible for him to do such works; his devout deportment also showed that he was a great prophet. When was there ever such things heard of a man? Those who were of the same mind with the Pharisees, cried out, that he was a deceiver, and that there would be an insurrection in the country on his account. Afterwards, as soon as Jesus revealed himself, every one was astonished at his doctrine, for it flowed from his lips like streams of living water; they were convinced, and many were constrained to believe. The

Pharisees were ready to vent their rage. Crowds of people were to be seen everywhere; one cried out one thing, another something else. When they came with spears and staves to take Jesus prisoner, an insurrection was expected, and I well recollect how much we were afraid; yet our journey turned out well. However, the day of trouble and trial was near at hand. The Jews were raging mad. The disputes became to be more serious; their rancorous clamour increased, till the stones began to be thrown as thick as hail; but the meek lamb, although he could have slain all at a word, left them raging and went away secretly, John viii. 59; yet he ceased not to do good. He found one born blind; to him he restored his sight. John ix. 1. This created a new disturbance among the Pharisees; they collected together and held a council, and put their ingenuity at invention to find an accusation against him; but he showed himself as a faithful shepherd, who had come to feed the souls of his sheep. John x. 12. He, therefore, again went out of this city to the other side of Jordan, whither a great multitude of people resorted to him, and even some of the Pharisees and scribes, who were always watching to ensnare him in his words.

W. S. What made them so exasperated at him?

S. C. Because his doctrine was so very different from theirs. They showed themselves holy before men, but all they cared for was to keep the Sabbath, wash their hands, and to bathe themselves often, to appear fasting, to make a great noise by praying before men, to gain great praise and honour ; but their hearts were unchanged, full of avarice, murder, and wickedness. Jesus reproved them for all this ; he told them that he did not regard their outward hypocrisy, nor their traditions, but he insisted upon a pure heart and a correspondent life with their profession ; that they should love their enemies, not to lay up treasures upon earth, nor to seek for a kingdom in this world. Matt. xvi.

26. He cautioned his disciples and the common people to beware of hypocrisy and of the Pharisees ; this enraged them very much, for they perceived that if his doctrine would prevail, that their power would be put down and could not exist ; to love one's enemies and not to offend them, not to seek for riches and strive to be great in the world. On account of this they derided him as much as they could, said he profaned the Sabbath, that he was deranged and had a devil, John v. 16, chap. x. 20 ; and, again, that he was the friend of publicans and sinners ; and the like did they allege against him. Matt. xiv. 19.

W. S. I am informed of this. But now I wish to hear more of the history.

S. C. Jesus travelled through the country, and went through cities, towns, and villages, taught and preached everywhere, and healed the people. He taught them to deny themselves, to take up the cross, and not to love supremely any thing in this world. Matt. xvi. 24. He taught by parables; and many came to him daily, one had one thing to say, another something else. He constantly exhorted them—he never indulged in trifling conversation.

W. S. It is easy to believe that many things were brought before him, for all manner of people came to him.

S. C. This is true; not all came to seek their salvation, but some even to request of him that he should assist him in dividing their temporal possessions, Luke xii. 13; others, out of curiosity, in order to ascertain whether many or few would be saved. Chap. xiii. 23. Others were curious to hear him; for there were many reports circulated through the country of things that had happened; how Herod Antipater was defeated of the king of Arabia, called Aretas, and routed all his people, and revenged the rejection of his daughter, the wife of the aforesaid Antipas, and the reception of the adulterous Herodias. Many rejoiced at this defeat of

Antipas, because he had killed John the Baptist innocently. Others related how Pilate had killed some wicked Galileans, and mingled their blood with their sacrifices ; and that the tower of Siloam fell suddenly and killed eighteen men. The people seemed much concerned about these and similar things, and to judge who might be guilty or innocent, and brought the question before Jesus. But to all this he answered them so definitely, that they never left him uninstructed. They passed through Samaria and Galilee, where he cleansed ten lepers, Luke xvii. 12, who very humbly entreated him ; and they came again to Jerusalem to the feast of dedication. John x. 22. There he again found much to do ! It was in December. Jesus walked about in Solomon's porch, when some malicious Jews formed a circle around him, and intended to compel him to say whether he was Christ ; for they still recollect ed the tumult that took place on his account, at the feast of Tabernacles, for that tumult was not wholly settled at that time ; and although Jesus made humble and satisfactory answers, they, as wicked men, came to him with their hands full of stones, in order to argue by blows. Jesus now went again out of the city, and came to Bethabara, near Jordan. Oh ! how often did he go sorrowful through the gates of the valley, of which a few pieces are still to be seen, and

fled towards Jordan. There always were rods to scourge the country, as you see to-day.

W. S. How long did he remain at that place?

S. C. Not long ; for he found occasion to return to Jerusalem.

W. S. Had he again to go among that wicked people ?

S. C. His disciples would have preferred staying on the other side of Jordan ; for the recollection of the spiteful and angry conduct of those villains, how they gnashed their teeth and took up stones, was still fresh in their minds, and also the fears, trouble, and sorrow they had to encounter on his account. But Jesus, who was all benevolence, seemed to have forgotten all that ; the importance of the journey made him forget all this.

W. S. The necessity of this must have been very great. Be pleased to proceed with your narration.

S. C. In the town of which I have told you before, there lay one of his dearest friends sick, called Lazarus, John xi. 1, and he was invited by his sisters, who had often entertained us. But when he arrived there, Lazarus had died, yet he was constrained by love, and still wished to go hither.

W. S. Did his disciples go with him ?

S. C. Yes ; but with fear and trembling : some altogether declined.

W. S. Did he go there to comfort his friends ?

S. C. Yes, and to raise their brother Lazarus from the dead.

W. S. O, what an astonishing miracle !

S. C. Jesus therefore went five miles through a forest, mountains and fields, till he came to Bethany, where he found great crying and weeping for Lazarus. Many from Jerusalem were there ; the sorrowful sisters ran to receive Jesus respectfully, the ministering Martha first, and then the silent Mary. They knew nothing of what Jesus intended to do, for their hearts were filled with sorrow ; all that were present, even Jesus himself, wept when they showed him the grave. It cannot be expressed with what great astonishment every one looked on when the dead man, by virtue of Jesus, began to rise and come out of the grave, and opened his eyes ; and when his paleness changed into a fine red, and his arms and hands began to move as if he had been awakened out of sleep. The news of this great miracle was reported everywhere in the same hour, the whole city was full thereof, they spoke of it in companies, at market, at meals, and all assemblies ; it seemed that every one was ready to go and see whether it was true. Many began finally to believe that he was Christ ; and that the Pharisees knew nothing about him.

W. S. But how was this received ?

S. C. So important a thing had never happened before. They began to fear about the destruction of the country, for if they had proposed Jesus for king (many murmured thereat) the Romans would not have suffered it, but destroyed the whole country; therefore seventy-two chief counsellors met, to hold a conference about this, and to prepare for the event. They all took their seats, and various resolutions were offered; for the cause was important to the whole country. At last a resolution was offered by Josephus Caiaphas, that there was no other remedy than that Jesus should die, and that by the first opportunity. Oh, how blindly were all these things done. That which they imagined to be a remedy, was the very cause of all their misery that happened them; for now the country is desolated by the Romans, not by Jesus, but by their own commotion. The news of this sentence soon reached Jesus; for shortly thereafter, public edicts were put up, in which they were commanded to seize Jesus, to deliver him into the hands of the Sanhedrim, or chief council.

W. S. How did Jesus behave when he heard of those measures?

S. C. He went away, on account of their bitterness, into his solitary place with us, which was a desert near the city of Ephraim, not far from Jericho. That country was exceedingly pleasant, the palm-trees were beau-

tifully green, the roses in full bloom, which, together with the precious balsam that grows there, emitted a fragrant flavour. The sun shone bright, for it was in the spring of the year when we were there, and remained during the month of March. Here it was more agreeable to be than among the exasperated Pharisees; we heard none other than words of consolation from the bridegroom of life, which were chiefly exercises of prayer and meditation. We would willingly have remained there always, but as the feast of the passover was approaching, he spoke about going away, and told us of the sufferings that awaited him, Matt. xx. 17, which grieved us in our hearts. There arose a dispute among us; for one was for having dominion over the rest, another murmured against it; but he soon appeased us wisely. Luke xxii. 24. We then passed through Jericho, where many people followed him, which he taught, and two poor beggars whom he restored to their sight, and they thanked him devoutly. Matt. xx. 22. He was benevolent and kind to all, even to sinners who came to him with a penitent heart; as did one of the chief among the publicans, named Zaccheus, Luke xix. 1, whose heart was so touched by the attracting love of Jesus, that he willingly divided the one half of his possessions among the poor; he wept on account of his sins. But to proceed with our journey, be it known to you, as we

passed through the desert Quarintania, and seeing the ancient ruins of cities, and passing on, we saw the splendid buildings of Jerusalem, the royal palace, the fortification of Antonia, the town of Ophel, Mount Acre with all its buildings on it, as well as Mount Be-setha. But the splendour of the temple exceeded all. Seeing all these things, our minds were differently impressed on account of what we apprehended that would take place. But we left the city on our right, and went to see our friends at Bethany.

W. S. How glad the friends must have been when their good shepherds arrived.

S. C. O, I cannot express it how welcome we were there. There was a devout excitement among the whole of them ; with a sorrowful heart they told us of the malice of the Pharisees, how they inquired for Jesus, and had issued edicts for that purpose. They thought that if we would go into the city, they would lay hands on us. But Jesus, in a friendly and kind manner, answered that he had been sent by his Father, to suffer on that festival day. When we were all in deep sorrow they prepared a supper, at which Martha served with such diligence as if that were to be the last time. Although there was enough to eat and to drink, we could not eat for sorrowing ; and the thoughts of the anticipated sufferings of Jesus filled all of us with grief, and particularly Mary, the sister of

Lazarus, sat and wept bitterly on that account, and as if she meant to presage his burial, poured a glass full of precious ointment on his head, and bathed his feet with her tears ; and at opening the ointment box, the house was filled with so pleasant an odour, as if the bodies of us all had been anointed. We were astonished at the great love of this woman, for 90 pence would not have paid for this ointment. From her fingers dropped myrrh ; and all, with the exception of one, who designed nothing good, wept bitterly ; yet that one feigned to weep. O, the false hypocrite !

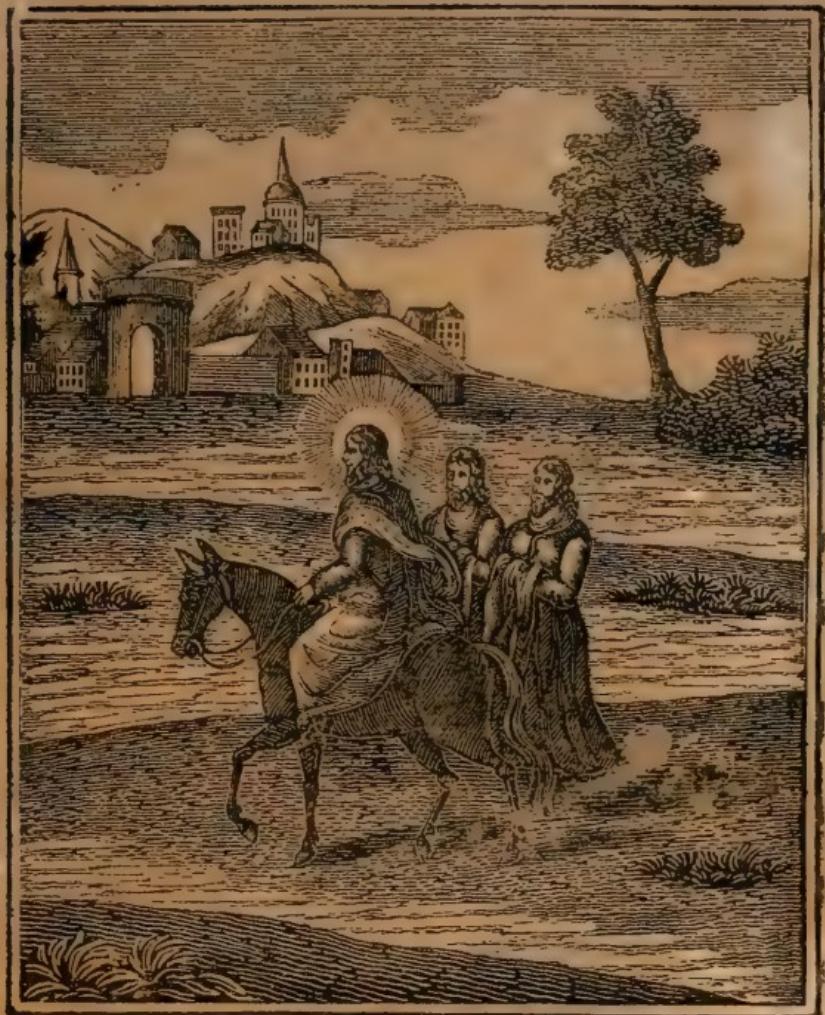
W. S. Father, this history affects you very much ; who could this have been ?

S. C. According to appearance, he was an apostle who sat with us ; but in his heart he was a traitor, he was very properly called Iscariot, that is, a grave planted with thorns. He was angry and filled with wrath, and showed a depraved heart at this anointing. He was determined to bring us into difficulties, and went into the chamber where the council of the high-priest were sitting. They looked at him with much pleasure, because he was one of the disciples of Jesus, and asked him what news they had brought them. He gave them to understand what he intended, namely, that he would betray his master into their hands if they would give

him money enough. His eyes, his very appearance was much altered, for the devil had taken all the good that Jesus had taught him out of his heart, and filled it with an evil spirit, else it would have been impossible for him to do such a thing. The chief-priests, who had not thought of such a thing, were much pleased, promised him money, and agreed with him for thirty pieces of silver, on condition that he should betray him in the night, without making a disturbance, or wait for an opportunity at some other time. With this treacherous heart he again came to us, but we knew nothing thereof. Jesus, who by his divine power, knew all things, saw his bargaining, yet he said nothing to him, but bore it patiently, evinced the greatest friendship towards him, for he took it as coming from his heavenly Father.

W. S. I know not what to be most astonished at, the malice of the traitor or the patience of Jesus, for both create an ocean of thought ! But I am anxious to hear more of this history.

S. C. Next day was Sunday, and Jesus, in order to fulfil the prophecy, entered the city on an ass, and therefore he sent two of his disciples to fetch it. In the mean time, we, in company with him, reached the village, situated on Mount Olivet, called Bethany ; the few remaining ruins of the wall show that it



Jesus enters Jerusalem.—pag. 328.

had been larger than it is now. You also see a road on the one side of the mountain. Matt. xxi. 1.

W. S. I see it.

S. C. There they met us with the ass, stopped and placed the Lord of lords thereon, and they hung the ass all over with clothes. But before he went away, a great many people assembled themselves, and came out of the city, not armed with weapons, but with green birch, in order to escort their king in triumph into the city. There was great rejoicing and crying; the road to Jerusalem, which was a distance of nearly two miles, was strewed with green branches of palm, olive, and other trees that grew along the roadside. All were full of joy; some took off their clothes and spread them on the road, as if they meant to escort a mighty prince; every one looked on Jesus, who could be seen above all the rest, riding, surrounded by a host of his disciples. The palm-limbs, on all sides, had the appearance of a forest, there were so many of them. "Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord," was a general song. The disciples then related the good deeds which had been done by his hands—how he made the deaf hear, the blind see, the dumb speak, the lame walk, and many other things he had done; yea, that he even raised the dead. Whereupon the people

testified that they had lately seen Lazarus, who rose from the dead, and cried, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David!" The cry was so great and general, that the Pharisees could not bear it, went to Jesus, and entreated him to command his disciples to quit this boisterous work (as they called it). But Jesus told them that it was impossible now to be silent, and not to praise God, and that otherwise the stones would cry out. Now, when he came to the foot of the hill, where he saw the city plainly, which was very handsome and splendid, and also the beautiful temple, with its golden roof glittering in the sunshine, together with the white and precious stones of its walls, and at the same time considered its future condition, because he, by his Divine prescience, saw all the distress and misery that would befall it, and which they experienced indeed, and in reality : and more than all this, that these judgments would come over it, on account of its sins, of which they would not repent, but continued to be impenitent ; seeing all this, he wept bitterly, Luke xix. 41, so that none of us could refrain from tears. He lamented their blindness, and foretold their downfall. He at last rode into the city, with his eyes and cheeks still wet with tears ; entered the gate which stood here at Mount Zion, called the watergate (of which you see nothing now but broken

stones). Now, when he came into the city, the multitude raised a great excitement, the doors and windows flew open, all were amazed, and asked, "Who is this?" But the host that followed, answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, of Galilee."

W. S. O, what a glorious entrance, for an unknown monarch! But what did he do in the city?

S. C. All that he thought had to be done before his sufferings. First, according to his custom, he went into the temple, and again drove the money-changers and merchants out, Matt. xxi. 12, as he had done at the commencement of his ministry; and when the Pharisees questioned him on account thereof, he, by three parables, gave them to understand their disobedience, wrath, and unrighteousness. He taught in the temple for three days, and every evening he went out to Bethany, or remained on the Mount of Olives through the night. During this time he had to experience many trials, much questioning and disputing to suffer from the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, who aimed at nothing but how to entangle him in his words. But his judicious answers quieted them, and met them in such a manner so that they dared not to question him any more. Afterwards he rebuked the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and told them of their destruction, on account of all the blood that had

been shed in Jerusalem. On Tuesday evening he went out of the temple, and the disciples showed the building of the temple to him with astonishment, together with its stones, which were so artfully joined together that the joints could not be seen. The doors of the temple were made in the same manner. Notwithstanding, Jesus told them that not one stone would be left upon another (which, although it then seemed impossible, happened in my time), as you, O son, may see at this day. In the evening, as we went out of the city, and sat on this hill, called the Mount of Olives, he foretold us all concerning the siege of the city, and what trouble, fear, and anxiety would happen to the citizens, the misery that would befall the whole country, the hunger, pestilence, war, and bloodshed. It seems to me as if I still heard him relate it with such anxiety of soul, that his words pierced our hearts, and were not spoken in vain; for just so it happened as he told us, as you may see it this very day.

W. S. Then you sat there till late in the night?

S. C. With us the night was mostly spent in speaking of things divine; particularly at that time when Jesus prepared himself to leave this world. On yonder hill there was at that time a village, called Gethsemane; there was a garden there, into which we often went to exercise ourselves in prayer;

for it was a very suitable, silent, and solitary place. Now, when Jesus had spent nearly two days in devotions, and the Pharisees, at the same time holding a council, so that he foresaw his death, he, like a father, declared his last will to his disciples : and on Thursday evening, when the passover had been prepared, according to law, and after the same had been eaten, he, with all the humility of a servant, subjected himself to his disciples, washed their feet, wiped them off, then again put on his clothes, and in great solemnity, broke the bread and divided it among us, and the cup likewise, and declared that in like manner he would offer up his body to be broken for us, Matt. xxvi. 26 ; which we did not at that time rightly understand. But when we saw his body hanging on the cross all torn and mangled, so that the blood streamed out of it like water ; ah ! then we understood what he meant by breaking the bread. Never before could we have imagined that the love of Christ was so great, and that the breaking of the bread was so great a mystery. But we, ourselves, experienced, heard, and saw it, so that at all times thereafter, we kept it up as a necessary ordinance, that not a particle of his bitter sufferings might be forgotten among us. Give me your attention further. When he had secretly exposed his betrayer, who like a thief had been excluded, in order to accomplish his

wicked design, when he thought that was now the proper time to deliver him whom he had sold ; Jesus, seeing that we were very sorrowful, comforted us like a father. O, I cannot describe how sweet the words were we heard at that time. When he went away we followed him, and he taught us on the road, and told us of many future things, as he was wont to do, so that our hearts burned with love towards him, and it seemed to us as if we could die for him. Peter, with a sword, went on before us, as if he was willing to destroy all ; but alas ! it proved to be nothing but children's play, blindness and ignorance. In such cases other swords are to be made use of, such as this hero and captain of faith did afterwards use. When we arrived in the aforementioned garden, he went away from us in great sorrow, and prayed fervently, for anxiety and trouble had encompassed him ; life and death contended ; his humanity placed before his view all the terrible sufferings, scourgings, shame, and derision which the Jews would inflict upon him, and the dreadful agony of death. Matt. xxvi. 36. Mark xiv. 32. Luke xxii. 39. All these unjust judgments, pain, and torments, which (had he been willing to avail himself of his power) he might have escaped, made his soul sorrowful unto death. However, his solicitude for our salvation, and the saving of many thousands of souls by his sufferings, who

would afterwards enjoy eternal happiness, bore him up amidst all this. Notwithstanding, he prayed to his heavenly Father, that if it were possible, this cup might pass from him ; and this he did three times. O, son ! you may imagine what agony he suffered, when his sweatlike drops of blood fell on the earth ; and had not an angel from heaven strengthened him, his sufferings would have been still greater. At last he ceased to contend with death, and resigned himself to the will of his heavenly Father, who, by his eternal wisdom, had ordered these sufferings to befall him ; and by this, his obedience, he regained what Adam, by his disobedience, had lost. Adam, contrary to the will of God, fulfilled the will of his flesh, and thereby inherited death. Christ, contrary to the will of the flesh, fulfilled the will of God, and inherited eternal life. Both happened in a garden ; both concerned the whole human family.

W. S. This is a good explanation, but I long to hear the rest of the narration.

S. C. He had hardly endured this great temptation, before a great noise was heard of men running all around the garden. Matt. xxi. 47. Mark xiv. 43. Luke xxii. 47. They were not ashamed to make use of the time of devotion. The disciples were suddenly awakened out of their sleep ; the torches shone bright, and the weapons rattled, which

caused great terror among them, John xviii. 3; yet they became somewhat encouraged, when they saw that the bold horsemen, at the words of Jesus, fell backwards, and that the cruel soldiers stood with trembling hands and pale countenances alongside of Judas, who, in order to accomplish his hypocritical designs, dared kiss Jesus with his unhallowed lips. At this, they laid hold of Jesus, ropes were brought, the sword brandished, for Peter resisted as far as he could. But, dear friend, very fortunately for himself, he drew the sword to slay the high-priest's servant, named Malchus; he did not hit his head, but his ear, and cut it off. All this, however, was not approved of by the merciful Jesus, who reproved Peter, and benevolently healed the servant's ear. Oh, he showed himself in no other manner than as the Lamb of God, in whom there was no anger. After that he was taken and bound by order of the great men of the temple, who were permitted for a short time to exercise their power and authority, and they fancied themselves to be great lords. They dragged and drove him over hills and dales, and never had any thoughts that they would also be bound by thousands in the same manner, and sold as servants to the Romans!

W. S. Thus they did not reflect on the consequences of their deeds. But what did they do with Jesus?

S. C. First, they brought him to Annas, where he was struck in the face ; thence he was taken through the streets to Caiaphas, the high-priest. The common people did not know what was going on. In the morning, one neighbour inquired of another, "What running there was in the night?" "Oh," said the other, "I heard that they took Jesus of Nazareth prisoner." The good man (the other one) would say, "Have they taken him prisoner? It would be better if they would take thieves and murderers prisoners, as there are so many of them in the country." John xviii. 13. Matt. xvi. Mark xiv. 53. Luke xxii. 54. John xviii. 19.

W. S. As to their going before Caiaphas, there, I suppose, the bow was already bent.

S. C. Oh, son, there they sat, and were as full of anger as a lion ; there were Caiaphas, Joazarus, Ishmael, Simon, Canuthus's son, Joannas, Alexander, and many others belonging to his council. There the innocent Lamb stood mute before his shearers. Two villains stood at the fire ; I do not remember all they said, falsely, to accuse Jesus. There it was plainly seen how much a good conscience can bear silently. But Caiaphas was anxious to get up something that would operate against him. He said that Jesus confessed that he was the Son of God. This enraged every one. One threw up his hands ; another tore his clothes ; the costly

garments of the high-priest were torn in pieces, and this presaged that this office would soon, like a rent garment, be useless. Every one seemed willing to have Jesus condemned to death. Meanwhile the villains who held Jesus mocked and reviled him; their behaviour was very rude and wicked. They spit into his face, covered it up and struck him with their fists, saying, "Prophesy to us, Christ." But, my dear friend, their wicked behaviour prophesied unto the country, that it would be made the scene of mockery for ever by the heathens. This wicked rabble (which now is as much at liberty as they were at the time when they were perfectly masters) slew their priests like dogs, without judge, jury, or sentence!

W. S. O, how man will often work out his own destruction!

S C. You may well say so. Now, at the break of day, they unanimously condemned him to death, Matt. xxvii. 1; to which nothing was wanting but the consent of the chief magistrate of the Romans, Pontius Pilate, who had, as I said before, come into the city Gratus, and was now a-judge for nearly six years. There they concerted on a plan what to prefer against Jesus, and urged it with so much vehemence, that Pilate would be obliged to give his consent to their judgment. They, therefore, concluded to take him to that place.

W. S. What did the disciples do in the mean time?

S. C. O, they were scattered like sheep without a shepherd. The sad news soon reached Bethany, where it occasioned much weeping and sighing among the women who followed him from afar, for they loved him ardently. Peter pursued a bad course; his reputation was laid into the dust; for instead of assisting Jesus and comforting him, he shamefully denied him, for his heart was encompassed with fear. When he was in the midst of the soldiers, every one attacked him to ascertain whether he felt sorry for what had happened; but he had to confess that he was too weak, and Jesus had to tread the wine-press alone, without any assistance. Matt. xxvi. 69. Mark xiv. 66. Luke xxii. 55. John xviii. 17. 25, 26, 27.

W. S. This is all true; however, I am not so much astonished at the weakness of Peter, as at the blindness of the high-priests, who, as spiritual builders of the house of God, ought to have been wiser than to condemn Jesus, who was the true corner-stone of the whole building.

S. C. It is written that this corner-stone would be rejected by the builder, of which there was a figure in the building of the temple, as our parents have related to us; for there was a stone which was altogether uneven and fit for nothing in the walls of the

building. Besides it had lain in the mud for a long time, so that every one walked over it; but when the building was nearly finished, there remained an opening above which could not be shut up completely, in spite of all the pains they took. They hewed and formed other stones as well as they could, but there always remained an opening, either on the one or the other side, so that they knew not how to shut it up completely. At last they remembered this stone, which lay in the mud, rejected by the builders, which, when it was brought, closed it up completely, that none could have done it so well. This stone, therefore, became the head of the corner, which was astonishing in the eyes of men; yet the Lord had done it, to serve as a figure of Christ Jesus. Besides, it is necessary to know, that the divine light did not always accompany the learned circles, but often passed by them; and that I pleased God particularly to use the unlearned as instruments of salvation, in order, thereby, to make ashamed the wise and prudent.

W. S. I am pleased with this, and wish to hear the remainder of this narration.

S. C. They then dragged Jesus before the judge, Matt. xxvii. 1. Mark xv. 1. Luke xxiii. 1. John xviii. 28, who was much surprised to hear so great a noise before his door so early. When he came to the door,

he saw many spears and weapons, and a very fine person, who stood as a prisoner, bound in the midst of them, and against whom the high-priests were dreadfully enraged ; they shook their heads—all accused him. But, by the patient behaviour of Jesus, and the bitterness of his opponents, Pilate soon discovered that they accused him falsely; notwithstanding, the innocent Lamb was brought to Herod, who lived a great ways off. Luke xxiii. 7. Oh, the running through streets, and the cries they made, I shall never forget. The courtiers mocked when they saw him. The degenerated novices, whose ears itched, found no pleasure in this suffering king. They mocked him by putting a white garment on him, and led him again, with shouting and crying, through the streets to the house of Pilate. But, alas ! how dreadful an end did those streets take ! How are they now reduced to ashes, and how has the whole city become the object of ridicule and scorn of the whole world ! O, well-deserved punishment ! How was Herod, before seven years had expired, mocked and laughed at, before Caius's, the emperor's, council : how shamefully was he driven away, like a thief, stripped of all his possessions and honour, as an exile in the distant country of France. On the road, he might well think that now he had become a derided king, instead of the inno-

cent Jesus, who was dressed in white, and exhibited as a public spectacle!

W. S. Father, you have digressed from your subject. I would rather hear how it terminated with Jesus.

S. C. O, son, that occurrence wounds my heart the more because I have lived to see all these things. But when Pilate again saw Jesus, he tried every expedient to release him; he declared to them that, according to their custom, he had to release one prisoner, yet he selected a worthless one, who had occasioned much dissension and murder; and because all people hated that one, he placed him alongside of Jesus, hoping that they would surely be so wise as not to favour the villain instead of Jesus, who was so fine a person, and had done so much good that many loved him. But he was deceived, for it took a very different course from what he had expected. Matt. xxvii. 15. Mark xv. 6. Luke xxiii. 17. John xviii. 39, 40.

W. S. Is it possible that it terminated otherwise?

S. C. You will hear that. Pilate then stood in the judgment-hall, with Christ and Barabbas at his side, bound; and as the people had assembled in great multitudes, who came from distant places, namely, from Galilee, Samaria, and other places, to the feast, he asked all those present, whom of these two they wished him to release, Barabbas or Jesus?

Then they consulted and considered, and turned their eyes on Barabbas, then again on Jesus, whom they very well knew, for it was currently known how much good he had done everywhere; how he made the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the sick well; how he had fed the hungry, and given the thirsty drink, and comforted the poor; that he even, shortly before, had taught all freely and powerfully in the temple. When they considered all this, they thought that it would be unsuitable and unjust, that so wise and good a man should be condemned; and so great a villain, a pest to the citizens, should be released. Although some asserted that he had not been accused in vain by the council of the high-priests, those who wished to have him released seemed to have the majority, and this would certainly have been done had not the common people been overruled. For the high-priests and elders of the people, who had already condemned him, immediately opposed the multitude when they heard them murmuring, and said, Matt. xxvii. 28, "O, ye men of Israel, be not in so great a hurry to cast your votes, but wait until you have heard us; remember that you are an unlearned and inexperienced people, who know nothing but your trades: we are priests, to whom spiritual things have been committed: we can judge better what is to be done with this

Jesus than you. It has the appearance as if he were pious and virtuous, but, indeed, he is a blasphemer, one who makes himself equal with God ; he is a Sabbath-breaker, a despiser of the laws of Moses and the fore-fathers. Barabbas, it is true, is a murderer, which also is abominable, but he destroys the body only—this one, by his delusions, destroys the soul. O, how much worse is he who destroys the soul for ever, than he who deprives the body of temporal life ? How much more is this one liable to die than the other ? And if you think that such a fine man should not be nailed to a cross, only consider that it is better for us that one man die for the people, than that the whole nation perish, which will certainly be the case if he is continued in his power, and this by the power of the Romans, for we are better informed in these matters than any of you." By such and similar advices, the multitude seemed to change their views. Some cast down their eyes as if they had taken it into consideration ; others, who were zealous for the law, began to talk of crucifying, and they waited with anxiety for Pilate to address the people, who was now speaking to one of his servants, who told him what his wife had commanded him to tell him, to keep clear of condemning this righteous person. Matt. xxvii. 19. Pilate now depended on the discretion of the people, hoping that they

would decide justly; and, therefore, he inquired whom of the two they would have released? The inquiry was hardly made, when they answered, "Release unto us Barabbas." Matt. xxvii. 21. Mark xv. 11. Luke xxiii. 18. Pilate, astonished at that answer, again inquired what he should do with Jesus. They again cried out, "Crucify him." Now when Pilate interfered and told them that he had not deserved death, they commenced so great a cry in all directions, that they could hardly be understood; for all who stood there cried out, priests, clergy, citizens, farmers, mechanics, and all the rest of the people, began to rage, so that Pilate was at last compelled to gratify their wishes. The murderer was immediately loosed from his bonds and set at liberty, but to their own punishment; for he was afterwards a great instrument among other robbers and murderers, to destroy the country. Matt. xxvii. 26. Mark xv. 15. Luke xxiii. 24, 25.

W. S. O, what perverted minds! But what further happened to Jesus?

S. C. Alas! no kind of cruelty was left untried on him. It was customary with the Romans first to scourge the one that was to be crucified. He therefore was delivered into the hands of the barbarous executioners, who tied him to a stone pillar. Matt. ii. 27. Mark xv. 16. John xix. 1. It grieves me to

relate, how pitifully they whipped him ; his body was covered with stripes and wounds, and the blood streamed from it. There were a great many soldiers present, instigating each other in acts of cruelty ; they derided and mocked Jesus, and to increase his sufferings, they led him into the judgment-hall, took off his clothes, and mocked him ; they put on him a purple garment, and for a sceptre gave him a reed into his hand. One gaped with his mouth open at him ; another bent his knees before him ; a third spit into his face ; a fourth, full of wrath and spite, struck him in his blessed face. Meanwhile others were engaged in plaiting a crown of thorns ; when they had pressed the crown upon his head, they were not satisfied to have lacerated his holy head, but took the reed out of his hand, and struck with it on the crown of thorns, so that the blood flowed and dropped down over his clothes. All these sufferings he bore patiently ; neither anger nor desire of revenge was seen in him, nor any sign of bitterness ; but his noble temper showed a mild, silent deportment, while Pilate observed and considered his innocence, and again undertook to silence the raging of the people, and to move them to compassion. But it would have been easier to move stones.

W. S. Father, your tears show that at

present your mind is confused by the consideration of these sufferings; but pause a moment.

S. C. He, therefore, had him brought with all those painful decorations which the soldiers had put on him, and placed him before the people, John xix. 4; so that all could see him, and all eyes be witness of this pitiful spectacle. Here Jesus stood, with a painful and mangled body, full of pain, and dressed in an old purple robe, his countenance covered with blood and spittle, a rough stick in his hand, with the leaves of the crown of thorns hanging about his head, and the blood running down over his head. Pilate entreated them to pity the condition of this man, but instead of that their anger and cries increased. The high-priests even threatened Pilate publicly with an impeachment before the emperor, if he would not have this man, who had made himself king, crucified. John xix. 12. Now, when the raging of the multitude increased so greatly that the judge had no hopes of succeeding in his design; still he could not conscientiously pronounce the sentence. He asked the whole multitude, whether they were willing to take the sin upon themselves? They, as if actuated to hurry into future punishment, took the sin upon themselves, and desired that his blood should be required of them and their children. Matt. xxvii. 24, 25.

W. S. That judgment which they themselves heaped upon their heads was dreadful.

S. C. O, son ! when all these things are taken into consideration, it is not to be wondered at that the blood flowed there like water ! The judge then went and washed his hands before the people ; and prepared himself to pronounce sentence. O ! when I recollect when he sat on the judgment-seat in the market place, and Jesus standing before him, surrounded with spears and pikes, and a great multitude of people, it still moves me to weep. It was at noon, the sun shone bright, the high-priests gazed upon him and rejoiced, the devout were full of grief, and turned pale, so that their hearts trembled when they heard the sentence pronounced ; for they still hoped until the last, that he would be released. No sooner was all this done, than they hurried him to Golgotha, which you see yonder. All were anxious to see the end of this drama ; some laughed, others wept. They showed Jesus his cross, which he had to put on his wounded shoulders, and carry it on the top of the hill. Matt. xxvii. 31. Mark xv. 20. John xvi. 17. O ! you may imagine how painful he felt, not only on account of his bruised body, which was bowed under the weight of the heavy cross, but also on account of the sufferings of his heart, because he saw his mother and other dear friends mourn for him. Some of the multitude comforted Je-

sus, and wept bitterly when they saw him fall on his knees under the weight of the cross, and had not Simon, of Cyrene, been compelled by the soldiers to assist him, he could not possibly have carried the burden. Matt. xxvii. 32. Mark xv. 21. Luke xxiii. 26. Everywhere they cried out that Jesus of Nazareth was to be crucified, and that they would go and see whether he would be able to deliver himself; or what other miracles would be done. The wretched people never once thought of the destruction of this city, which was already before their doors, and before their eyes. Luke xxviii. 27-31. Lastly, he was brought to the place, which was strewed over with dead bodies and bones.

W. S. O ! what a heartrending sight this was !

S. C. How much more was I pricked in my heart. Even he who felt but a small degree of love towards him could hardly look upon all this ; for his hands were stretched out, his feet suspended, the blood running when the nails were driven through them, the pains he suffered in erecting the cross, the great patience with which he suffered all this—how earnestly he prayed for them, Luke xxiii. 34, when they crucified him, although they offered him nothing but vinegar and gall in his great thirst. Matt. xxvii. 34. O ! should I relate all, my heart would burst with sadness, and this so much the

more, when I consider how little they took it to heart, even those who should have been melted to tears.

W. S. What do I hear, father!—were they not moved by this?

S. C. It seemed as if every one studied how to increase his sufferings; the high-priests, the Pharisees, the chief captain, the soldiers, the common people; yea, even one of the two who suffered death with him, mocked, abused, and upbraided him. Matt. xxvii. 39–44. Mark xv. 29–32. Luke xxiii. 35–39. Caiaphas was so bold and haughty as if he was powerful enough to do any thing. But afterwards, he and his whole host learned dear whom they had mocked; for he saw the downfall of his glory, and the destruction of his generation. O! at that time he might well remember Jesus, and how shamefully he wagged his head at him, as well as the rest of the people. Notwithstanding, some were sore afraid when in the bright mid-day it became so dark that they could see the stars. Matt. xxvii. 44. Mark xv. 33. Luke xxiii. 44. At that time the sun was in Aries, and the moon in Libra, so that a heathen philosopher called Dionysius, who was well skilled in astronomy, saw this eclipse even in Egypt, and declared, that either the Godhead was suffering, or the end of the world had come. When this unusual eclipse of the sun appeared, the people who

stood about became struck with terror ; so that one smote on his breast, another went astonished towards the city, the third mourned on account of his misdeeds, and cried to Jesus for pardon, who, in his mercy, opened the door of paradise for him. Luke xxiii. 42, 43. But among all these, none were so obstinate as the wise of the land : those who ought to have shone as bright lights before the common people, were themselves blinder than moles.

W. S. Father, it is strange that they did not recognise him to be the true Messiah ; for if I understand you rightly, there appeared neither power nor ability in him, but he hung on the cross between two malefactors. He was forsaken, cursed, and despised. It seems to me as if they were not altogether mistaken. Yet I am willing to be instructed by you.

S. C. I, myself, would approve of their conduct, had these things not been foretold by the prophets, for there is no part in history which had not been clearly described by them. Zaccharias prophesied of his being sold, and the price thereof, Zacch. xi. 12. Isaiah of his scourging, mocking, and shame, and also that he would be hanged between two malefactors, and be an offence to every one. Is. liii. David said that they would give him vinegar and gall to drink, wag their heads at him, cast lots for his garments,

wound his hands and feet, and extend his body in such a manner that all his bones might be counted. He speaks of his being forsaken on the cross, Ps. xxii. and lxix., and many other things, which were all clearly fulfilled, and which they could plainly see on that day ; yet they did not believe. Besides, there are two things yet to be noticed, which ought to have made them repent. First, the signs, for as I have said, the sun was darkened for three hours ; afterwards, when he gave up his spirit, the earth quaked, the rocks were rent, and also Mount Calvary bursted in the midst, as you can still see ; the tombs were opened, and the dead came forth ; the precious veil that hung at the entrance of the temple made of red and azure-coloured silk, which was twenty-five cubits in length and sixteen wide, and held by two cherubim, was rent in the middle, which had never happened before. Matt. xxvii. 51-53. Mark xv. 38, 39. Luke xxiii. 45-47. These signs, which even moved and convinced the heathens, should have occasioned some reflections among the Jews. For I can still see how pale and distressed the chief captain cast his eyes on the earth, and how he went away, mourning within himself, when he saw all these things. Again, his innocence, goodness, and righteousness ought to have excused him, for there was no cause of death to be found in him, as much as they

sought for it ; still they condemned him, because they were full of malice and wickedness. I still say, that when I consider how miserable he hung extended on the cross, how all his bones could be seen, how the blood dropped from his hands, how the blood, flowing from his feet, stained the cross with blood ; how the blood gushed out of his pierced side, John xix. 34 ; how he bowed his head, and was as pale as death, and how his friends and acquaintances, when seeing all this, cried and wept ;—I am not at all astonished that a city such as this has been desolated, and that the whole multitude, who made themselves so busy in these things, perished shamefully.

W. S. Do you say so, father ?

S. C. Alas ! they all were punished. Judas, in despair, went and hanged himself to a tree, his entrails sent forth a foul stench, as if they witnessed of his inward wickedness. Matt. xxvii. 5. Acts i. 18. Pilate, the judge, five years afterwards, was sent to France by the emperor Caius, to live in misery, where he committed suicide. Herod Antipas, who had John beheaded, and assisted in increasing the sufferings of Christ, shared the fate with his adulterous Herodias, which I mentioned before ; they went about mourning in France, where they died. Of Annas and Caiaphas I have not much to say, for they also received their reward. A great number of

the great priests and Jewish noblemen, some of whom had given their consent to the death of Christ, I have seen nailed to the cross by Florus the judge. I also saw how their wives were killed, and their children stabbed before their eyes : there were more than three thousand altogether ; no tongue could express the great misery. Florus was much accused for his tyranny, as if he alone was the cause of it ; but Divine vengeance did all this. It happened about thirty-two years after the crucifixion of Christ, when I was seventy-eight years of age, that I saw all these things. You may well imagine that I was fully convinced that it was the vengeance which this generation had merited ; although they were blinded and did not see it.

W. S. This is all very true, father ; but before you proceed with your narration, I wish you to tell me what became of Jesus.

S. C. When all his friends and acquaintances had met and taken him down from the cross, and saw how his wounds streamed with blood, and remembered that he had to suffer all this innocently, and what a comforter they had lost in him, Matt. xxvii. 35. Mark xv. 46. Luke xxiii. 49, and were inspired with ardent love and compassion towards him, they wept very much, and mourned greatly, like those in ancient times did in the field of Megiddo, when Josias, the pious king, nad been killed, and taken bleeding from the

wagon. It is impossible for me to tell how sad their hearts were, so that they could not cease weeping, for he was lamented as the only beloved son of his mother, yet had they thought that he would rise again from the dead on the third day, as it has happened, they would not have been so much grieved.

W. S. Father, you speak of strange things; but, what! do you say he rose again!

S. C. Yes; he rose again from the dead; or what would have all availe?

W. S. I am anxious to hear how that took place.

S. C. O! son, that is a circumstance of great surprise and joy. But I will first relate to you how sad we were before this joyful event took place. While Jesus lay in the grave, it seemed as if all our joys had been buried with him; our minds were grieved in various ways, on the one hand by the loss of his consoling and agreeable company, on the other, by the remembrance of his cruel sufferings and ignominious death which he had to suffer. More than all this, it appeared as if all our zeal, trouble, labour, and all that we had done on his account, such as leaving friends, money, property, and honour, had been in vain, and we would not be compensated, for Jesus was dead and laid into the grave; besides this, we also considered the miserable end it would take with us. Judas hung himself, Peter also seemed to be in

despair on account of his mournful condition ; we were full of grief, and fled shamefully, the women cried and wept so much that they could have bathed themselves in their tears. In short, we were as full of anxiety and fears, as a woman in travail. On the contrary, in the city they rejoiced greatly, they indulged in feasting, banqueting, singing, playing, dancing, and all other kinds of vanity, so that it seemed as if they sported with our afflictions. Herod and Pilate rejoiced together, became friends, and sent presents to one another ; drank wine like water ; and as they were the chief officers in the country, every one was full of joy on their account. Caiaphas, and all the high-priests, had never before been so full of joy, for they rejoiced that Jesus had fallen into their hands, as they had so often vainly attempted to take him. They spoke scornfully of Jesus of Nazareth, and said that now his audacity had been punished, that now they well could see that he had been a false prophet, who had no other design than to raise an insurrection in the country. They said that now they had no more to fear, and that his disciples could practise no deception, for the ground was well guarded. Matt. xxvii. 66. They often laughed and were pleased that they had been so brave ; and as there were all kinds of people in the city, some commenced to sing disgraceful and blasphemous songs in derision of Jesus, as David

had prophesied. Ps. lxix. 12, 13. We dared not to show ourselves in the streets, for they pointed their fingers at us and abused us everywhere, so that we were much dejected. Moreover, the high-priests threatened us with death if we would assemble, so that we were compelled to assemble secretly; so that on this great festival day, on which all rejoiced, we were mourning, weeping, and lamenting, like orphans who had lost their father and their comforter.

W. S. That was mournful! But I long to hear the end.

S. C. It will much astonish you when I relate it. Early in the morning, before any person was in the streets, some women arose, Matt. xxviii. 1, and took some boxes with ointment in order to embalm his body and preserve it from corrupting, Mark xvi. 1. Luke xxiv. 1. John xx. 1, according to the custom of that day among us, among the Egyptians, and other nations. When they came to the door of the sepulchre, which had been hewn into a rock, they were much afraid, for they saw that the stone which had been placed at the mouth of it, was taken away, Mark xvi. 4. Luke xxiv. 2, and supposed nothing else but that his body had been stolen by the Pharisees. This astonished them so much, that they knew not what to do. One of them, called Mary Magdalene, returned with a sorrowful and

sad heart, and told Peter and John, weeping, of her distressed situation. The other women went on and found the grave empty, and an angel, in the form of a young man, dressed in white, told them of the resurrection of Jesus, and that they should tell it to the apostles. John xx. 2. Matt. xxviii. 5, 6, 7. Mark xvi. 5, 6, 7. Luke xx. 3, 4. But that was a strange tale to them. They also saw the soldiers lying in their armour like dead men, speechless, as if they had been struck by lightning. This frightful sight made the women so afraid, that they knew not how to get away and hide themselves quick enough. In the mean time Peter and John, who had heard the message of the women, came to the grave, Luke xxiv. 11. John xx. 3-8, and did not find the body, nor did they see any vision, but only the linen clothes; so they went away again and left Mary standing and weeping at the grave, who, when she stooped down and looked into it, saw two angels: afterwards she saw Jesus, and supposed him to be the gardener, because by his appearance he seemed to be none other. The scene, however, was soon changed, for Jesus made himself known, and the heavenly joy her heart felt at that time cannot be described. John xx. 10-17. She fell down before him, weeping, and adored him, because her life, joy, comfort, and her all, depended alone on his presence. With this joyful message, she

went to the eleven apostles, and to the others that were present with them, and sighed and wept for the loss of their good shepherd. John xx. 18. In the mean time the rest of the women took courage, and returned to the grave, where two angels reproved them for their unbelief, and again commanded them to inform his disciples of his glorious resurrection. When they went away rejoicing, and with a full assurance that Jesus was willing to make them as happy as Mary Magdalene, he met them, and saluted them in a friendly manner, which filled their hearts anew with joy. Matt. xxviii. 8, 9, 10. They came to the assembled company. Luke xxiv. 9. Before Mary had finished her conversation, these came and corroborated all she had seen and heard.

W. S. O what wonders! But did they all credit this report?

S. C. O no, they looked at it merely as dreams, tales, and vain talk; and especially because two of the apostles themselves had been there and did not see any of these visions. Mark xvi. 11. Luke xxiv. 11. Yet the women spoke confidently of what Jesus had spoken to them, of his person, of his deportment, and all; and of the wonderful appearance of angels. But all this was of no use, for they looked upon them as weak-minded women, who could easily fancy such things to themselves. Some seemed to be-

lieve it; others doubted; so that, although we were somewhat comforted, still we were in doubt, not knowing what to think of it.

W. S. How could a father suffer his forsaken orphans to weep long? How could a bridegroom see his beloved languish, and not comfort her? How could a shepherd suffer his flock to run scattered in the desert, in the midst of wolves and other ravenous beasts, without coming to rescue them?

S. C. The sheep were bleating, but the shepherd seemed not to hear them. The bride sought her beloved with tears, but he concealed himself. The children wept bitterly, and appeared to be forsaken of the father, because they heard not his voice. But pay attention to wondrous things. North of us is a desolate hamlet, called Emaus, Mark vi. 12. Luke xxiv. 13-23; thither went my father in company with others to his place of residence. There the fields were beautifully green with grain and grass, olive and fig trees lining the road on either side: the birds were warbling, chirping and basking in the mid-day sun. But all this did not comfort them; their hearts were heavy and full of sorrowing; they seemed to be in deep despair, and all their hopes were blasted. They were reflecting on the promises made of the Messiah, who was to sit on the throne of David, and rule the Gentiles, and redeem Israel from the dominion of their enemies; who was to be, like Solomon, a

peaceful king, and rule them with wisdom and in righteousness. They thought that Jesus was to do all this: but, alas! their hopes were blasted. The Gentiles conquered him, and he was mocked by every one, and shamefully nailed to the accursed wood, quite differently from what they anticipated. In addition to this, their minds were also exceedingly perplexed on account of what they heard from the women. When their minds were thus perplexed, Jesus appeared to them as an unknown Joseph, to feed them with spiritual food. He appeared to them a stranger—as one ignorant of all that had taken place; and they told him all that had transpired. But he instructed them that they looked too prematurely for this kingdom; that they had not taken the cross into consideration, which, according to the prediction of the prophets, was to precede their anticipated joy. These words burned within them. They were convinced that he had spoken the truth; but they did not know whence he had this knowledge. Their hearts were most powerfully drawn to this pilgrim. He appeared to them a wonderful person! The day drew to a close. It was time to bid each other good night; but this was impossible. They invited him to tarry all night with them: ne was persuaded. Then there happened a greater wonder still: the table was set, and instead of

holding a long conversation, he lifted his eyes to heaven in devotion, and then broke the bread; after this they immediately recognised him whom they had with them; and as they were about falling on his neck to kiss him, he vanished. Then they were astonished, and sought for him in the house in vain; none of the domestics saw him, neither did they hear a door open, nor the footsteps of a man; and then they thought on what the women had told them, and were exceedingly sorry that they did not believe what they said; for they had now seen him themselves, and their hearts were filled with the burning rays of the power of his words.

W. S. What did they afterwards do?

S. C. They were as a hunter who is in pursuit of his object, and is determined to pursue, sparing no pains, till he has overtaken what he was in pursuit of. They then went back the same way, and hastened toward Jerusalem, and told us many things—told us when he would leave us—that he approached them as a father. Luke xxiv. 33–35. Mark xvi. 18. O! we fools, that we did not know him; had we only kissed him when our hearts burned for love, he would perhaps not have left us; but who will resist his divine power, who can compel him? But what are we doing at Jerusalem? We may relate our joys, but who will believe us?

Will they not think all we say are fables? What do we say more than the women did, who are not altogether without some experience. Thus conversing together, they went on their journey—the rising full moon affording them light to cross the mountain at Jerusalem—going on till they arrived at the house where the other disciples were assembled. They knocked at the door, and scarce had they entered, till they were told how Jesus had appeared unto Peter, 1 Cor. xv. 5, and comforted, strengthened, and encouraged him. Then my father Cleophas told what had happened him and Amaon, which was corroborated by the testimony of the women, which agreed like a heavenly harmony. Notwithstanding, there were some who did not know what to think, wishing to experience it for themselves, but the company was considerably more comforted than before; however, they were not fully relieved from their perplexities.

W. S. This, however, is a wondrous history; but did these doubting ones continue much longer in this perplexed state of mind?

S. C. As I told you before, it was impossible for him to conceal his love; but, like Joseph, who could no longer refrain making himself known to his brethren, and said, "I am Joseph, your brother, come hither." Thus did Jesus appear in the midst of his disciples, and said, "Peace be with you!" Luke

xxiv. 36. John xx. 19. But fear seized their hearts, as Joseph's brethren were seized with fear; for none had opened the door for him to come in. But he stood in their midst, as if surrounded by a cloud—he could make himself invisible, or vanish in an instant. When Jesus saw that they were much troubled in mind, he convinced them by showing the prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and by eating in their presence, that he was personally with them, and that it was not the appearance of a ghost or spirit. O! what joy there was excited among the disciples, when they had found the long sought for treasure.

W. S. I feel rejoiced on their account. But what did they do who were not present?

S. C. They were still doubting. But, like a king of whom it is reported that he has been slain, appearing in the midst of his soldiers to comfort them, so also did Jesus appear, and showed himself to doubting Thomas. John xx. 26-29. He showed him his wounds in his hands and feet—his side, which was pierced with a spear. Afterwards he showed himself to seven of his disciples at the seashore, where they were engaged in fishing; and afterwards he showed himself to five hundred brethren in Galilee, and encouraged them. He exhorted, encouraged, and comforted them— instructing them how to conduct themselves, when he should be

taken away from them, in preaching the gospel, how to baptize, and to observe all things ; he commanded them, to preach the gospel in Judea after his resurrection and ascension. John xxi. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 6. Matt. xxviii. 16-20. Mark xvi. 15-18. Acts i. 3-8.

W. S. What do I hear ! Did he ascend to heaven ?

S. C. O ! my son, that is the kingdom which God had promised from eternity, for he is eternal ; he was from eternity, he was before the creation. Here, upon earth, there are only earthly monarchies, which will perish ; as I gave you to understand, that it was not only the case with the kingdom of Israel, but also with the Persian, Grecian, and will finally be the case with the Roman empire. For here there is nothing abiding or permanent, because it is all earthly and perishable. True, it may have the appearance of being permanent, but finally it will perish, as did the kingdom of Herod ; and finally the city of Jerusalem. In vain did they foolishly wait for the restoration of their temporal kingdom ; for God is not pleased therewith, because he is a spiritual king, and he will establish the spiritual kingdom for ever, and govern it to the joy of the believers, and thus fulfil all the prophecies, shadows, and figures which were set forth in the law and the prophets, and to establish a better kingdom. But the whole is comprised

in one point, it is accomplished in Christ, who has now ascended into heaven. All that you heard of Adam, Noah, or of the other prophets, is now accomplished, and hereafter we need not look for any thing more.

W. S. These things are somewhat incomprehensible ; but in the mean time, permit me to ask, why did not the Jews generally receive this ?

S. C. Their own obstinacy is the principal cause ; for they intentionally fabricated falsehoods, not only with a view to kill him, but also in relation to his resurrection ; for the guard unanimously asserted that the person of Jesus was stolen from the grave while they were fast asleep, and had been terrified by the earthquake which had happened ; so that had they only loved the truth, they would have come to the light, but they desired not the truth, and bribed the guard that they should deceive the people with lying. Matt. xxviii. 11-15. And thus they remained obstinate, and persecuted the disciples of Jesus, as you will hear by-and-by, and upon which this dreadful punishment succeeded.

W. S. Was this deception not brought to the ears of Pilate, so that he might have punished them ?

S. C. True, he was apprized of it ; but they bribed him also ; nevertheless, he wrote a letter to the emperor Tiberius, at Rome,

and informed him of the wonders and works of Jesus, and what had happened him. Whereupon the council resolved that he (Christ) should be deified and numbered among the gods ; for it was contrary to the laws of Rome to deify any one without the consent of the council. For thus it had pleased God that his people were not to be under the protection of the strong arm of the law, so that his spiritual kingdom should grow, increase, and flourish alone by his power.

W. S. I understand this. Please to tell me more of this ascension, for I am anxious to hear of it.

S. C. He gave us a promise that we were to be miraculously filled with the Holy Ghost ; and commanded us to remain together, and not depart from Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 49. Acts i. 4, 5. Afterwards he assembled his disciples (as a shepherd would his sheep), exhorting them to look for another kingdom than the one they had hitherto been expecting : that the promises of God were not earthly, but heavenly ; and that he had suffered to that end, and that he was now only going on before to prepare for them a heavenly mansion, which they should look for through much suffering and tribulation. Then he led them out to that place, yonder, called Bethany, Luke xxiv. 50 ; for there some of his intimate friends resided, as you

heard before ; there all his dear children assembled—there they wept most bitterly ; for they were no less attached to him than Elias and Elijah were to each other ; but he comforted them, and went to Mount Olives ; they all followed him. At last he stood still, lifted his hands, and blessed all of them, like Moses blessed the twelve tribes of Israel, and in the midst of these solemnities a cloud descended and caught him up. With amazement we looked after him ; our eyes were fixed upon him ; our hearts seemed to follow him, out of great love. Mark xvi. 19. Luke xxiv. 51. Acts i. 9. Had it been possible for us to ascend, we would have followed him, but it was not possible. We still gazed after him ; and I do not know when we should have desisted gazing after him, for our love to him was so great ; weeping and wailing would have continued long. But, behold, there were two men dressed in white standing beside us, who told us that we were gazing in vain, that we might expect him again to return ; but that he will come again in power and glory, and therefore we had much cause of rejoicing. Acts i. 10, 11.

W. S. This I understand. Now I am desirous to know how this promise was fulfilled, and what they accomplished.

S. C. O, my son ! it was a new era of reformation, or a new creation. The plants, which were recently planted in the borders

of Judea, now grew to be sturdy trees, with branches overshadowing the whole country. The twelve apostles were here like the twelve tribes of Israel, increasing to an innumerable seed, even as it had been prophesied centuries beforehand. The order in which this happened, I will tell you. At first we went rejoicing from the mount to this city; remained together in one place; spoke of the things we had seen; we were in the temple, or in the hall thereof, to attend to divine worship, and there we sang and prayed. Luke xxiv. 52, 53. Acts i. 12-14. O, the sweet conversation we had! Nothing could be more agreeable to us then in our distress. But our heavenly call buoyed us up. After Judas had left us, and the number of us being but eleven, we supplied his place by casting lots, and the lot fell upon a pious and devout man of the house of David, called Matthias, who was then to assist us in spreading the gospel. Acts i. 15-26. After remaining ten days here, engaged in our religious exercises, and it being the time when the Jews held a great feast, called the feast of the pentecost, when all the Jews had to appear at Jerusalem to sacrifice, then there happened a great wonder; for there was heard the sound of a strong wind, yet not violent; a hurricane, yet no destruction followed; a great noise, yet not like that in the time of Moses on Mount Sinai, when every

one fled ; an exceeding great storm, yet not of destruction—like that when the tower of Babel was building, when one language was divided into many, but where many languages were made one, or united into one. The Holy Ghost filled our hearts with unspeakable joy. He is *one*, yet he sat upon each, inditing in different languages, with such a perfect harmony as if it had been sweet music, when all strike the same note. After this astonishing heavenly music had enraptured us, and many looked on with astonishment, it was soon reported through all the city ; some saying, “Come and see the great wonders which have happened the Galileans, for there these unlearned men are standing, some of whom are fishermen, and speak strange languages with so much facility, and so perfectly, that if they were natives of the respective countries. They are exciting the people, showing them that they are great sinners, and are declaring the way of salvation.” Many, therefore, assembled who came from different countries. Acts ii. 5–12. The crowd was so great that they had scarce room to stand : then they saw with what joy we were filled, and the wonders we spake of. Some of whom, as well as we, were transported with joy ; some were astonished, not knowing what to think of all this. But there were others, malicious Jews, who reported that we were drunk,

Acts ii. 13 ; but Peter stood up in the midst of them, and viewing the multitude, and they looking at him, he commenced preaching, and showed them that these were not drunk, but that it was what had been predicted long beforehand—the gift of the Holy Ghost which God had promised. He also testified of and proved the resurrection of Christ, and exhorted all to repent who were guilty or had any part in crucifying Christ, so that they might obtain grace. This pierced their hearts like a two-edged sword, and prepared them as fruitful ground. Acts ii. 14–36. The penitent wept profusely, and tremblingly inquired what to do ; and were baptized on confession of their faith, even as Jesus had commanded shortly before his ascension, and came out from among the Pharisees, and joined in with the believers, so that their sins might be blotted out. Acts ii. 37–41. O, if you only had seen the excitement ! how many were running to and fro, crying and weeping, and afterwards filled with joy unspeakable, because they passed from death unto life ; and thus the number of one hundred and twenty was soon increased to three thousand.

W. S. What an astonishing increase in so short a time !

S. C. O, my son, the increase of the number was not so remarkable as the consequent change which followed ; for this great num-

ber was as one man, Acts ii. 42; the three thousand were of one mind, even so as bread is baked of many thousand grains that one cannot be known from the other; or like a great fire made by laying together many sticks, so that the more sticks the greater the fire, and would, in reality, be but one fire. Thus were these hearts melted together by the fire of the Spirit, that they were one heart, one soul, one will, one love, one hope, one joy! A work that God performed—such a grand reformation among the people. It appeared as though paradise was again restored. The golden period appeared to be ushered in; all what Cain and Nimrod had undone was again restored. The lambs fed with the wolf; the young child handled the serpent; and the weaned child put his hand into the mouth of the basilisk; there was neither contention, nor any one to molest, on the mountain of the Lord.

W. S. It is difficult for me to understand this; will you please to explain it.

S. C. My son, it was Cain who first divided the land into parcels, and invented measure and weight, so that each said, "This is mine, that is yours; thus far you may come and no further; here my borders begin, and there yours." After him arose Nimrod, after the flood, and used violence to enforce these things, and lorded over his fellow-men, and subdued many; and hence some artful

persons who were studying day and night how much money they could hoard, and declared by their laws, "This is mine;" and any one who would resist was threatened to be stung with their poisonous barbs, or pierced through with their deadly basilisk-eyes; such a sight frightened the lambs, and they were afraid to look at them. Others, like voracious wolves and bears, showed their murderous teeth, devoured the innocent lambs, cows, and other domestic animals, or made them to be subject in large numbers, so that all things were theirs; they had the pastures, the wool, and the milk, and every thing else, so that avarice seemed to be sanctioned by law. Many evils grew therefrom, such as contentions, envyings, hatred, murder, and thus vexing the pious and innocent who followed after the general love of God, the creator of all things, they were satisfied with the common comforts of life.

W. S. I have understood your parable; but was this state of things changed, and did a better state of things follow?

W. S. It was wholly changed; for as soon as each felt the operations of the Spirit, so soon were they free from this venomous principle. The avaricious became liberal, good hearted, free-givers; they distributed their surplus moneys among the needy, that they also might have to live upon; they destroyed their indentures by which the poor

were oppressively held; were ashamed to take usury, sold their possessions, and had all things in common. Nay, they did not say that those possessions were theirs, for they knew that the poor stood more in need of them than they, whom they had so long oppressed. Here it was demonstrated that charity is the bond of perfection—charity that is impartial, uniting all. Here this principle was so all-prevailing, that legal process was not resorted to. Court-houses were little frequented, and lawyers had no clients; consequently none to pay them fees. The innocent ones had no occasion to fear these vipers and adders, but came without fear to mingle with them; for they were deprived of their venom; they united as brothers and sisters. Those who had been as cruel as wolves and as fierce as lions, became as docile and tame as lambs, and regretted it exceedingly, that they suffered themselves to be bewitched by the sorcery of Circe. But it was through the wisdom of God that this miraculous change was wrought.

W. S. The poor must have been exceedingly glad of this, who were formerly so much oppressed of these avaricious persons.

S. C. They rejoiced as though they had been released from a dismal dungeon and placed into a royal palace. They assembled nearly every evening. A table common to all was prepared; one came with his basket

of bread; another with a basket of meat; another with a flask of wine, or some other drink. Their language was, "Praise, brothers, praise ye the Lord, who gives us all things bountifully. None shall want: be not solicitous on account of your poverty; all that you need shall be given you freely." And they spent their time in praising and conversing of the Lord, and comforting each other. Exercising in acts of devotion, their hearts were filled with joy—with the joys of the Spirit of love, and hence these feasts were called *love feasts*.

W. S. O the paradise upon earth! But did not the wealthy regret to depart with their goods and possessions when they saw how they diminished; or did not the poor become voluptuous and overbearing, as is often the case when they see that the rich are humbled, and they share part of the goods; for many of the poor become very impolite and profligate, when they get to rise in the world?

S. C. Touching the first. Because the rich were enlightened of God, they did not care for more than what was sufficient for the common comforts of life; therefore they had no occasion to be solicitous about many things. Besides that, they saw the hand of God work powerfully in this communion, so that everywhere there was abundance; and

because there were none idle, but all industriously employed, they could, therefore, readily conclude that the joint labour of many, properly managed, would support a greater number, than for a few to labour and others to spend it: besides every thing was brought under an economical management, and many living together, there was a great saving in that respect. But the most remarkable was, that they dedicated themselves and their possessions unto the Lord, whom they served, and who promised to provide for them in all things necessary. And they also bore in mind how Jesus, their master, spoke against the riches of this world. To be like him, they preferred being poor, as being the more secure condition for them. Respecting the poor becoming voluptuous or proud, I have to reply that the wholesome doctrines and the fear of God, of which they always conversed, both at their feasts and in their meetings, kept them within due bounds, so that nothing of the kind was heard or seen, lest they would be excluded; and they did delight to be in the church—for the ungodly have no pleasure in meeting with the pious. And there was such a power of the Spirit among them, that all these things were completely suppressed; so that the Holy Ghost formed them as of one lump, into one harmonious whole.

W. S. How much depends upon good order, especially among much people, and where God has the oversight.

S. C. Your observation is correct. It happened that a certain man and his wife* were prevailed on to dispose of their possession and to retain part of the money for their own use. But they were punished with death through the words of Peter. One of them was scarcely carried away, when the other came in, and also fell down dead; and great fear came upon all the believers, and upon as many as heard these things. Acts v. 1-11.

W. S. O! the wonders!

S. C. Thus did God work mightily in this church, whither they came flocking from every direction; so that the number of three thousand was soon increased to five thousand, Acts iv. 4. Not only were they the common people, but among them were also the priests who ministered in the temple, that believed; one saying to another, "Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord, the house of the God of Jacob; for there they saw the glory of the Lord, of which the prophets spake." The Pharisees were confounded; for it so happened that the lame began to walk, Acts iii. 1-10, the blind were restored to their sight, the lepers were cleansed, all manner of disease was healed by calling alone on the

* Ananias and Sapphira his wife.

name of Jesus. Nay, some were healed by being overshadowed of the apostles in passing by them, Acts v. 11-15, which caused the multitudes both to wonder and praise God ; for they saw the power of the Lord ; and how innocently Jesus was crucified by the instigations of the high-priests, which caused no little disaffection among the common people. "The cripples and those who were sick, are well known. Behold, that man was lame from his infancy, and was sitting begging at the gate of the temple ; but now he has thrown away his crutches, and is now perfectly whole. This was done in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, who travelled through all the land, and did many such signs and wonders. What do you think ? our priests had him crucified, and slew him as a disturber of the peace." And the like conversations were common among the people.

W. S. But how did the Pharisees behave ?

S. C. They were inwardly enraged, and resisted the apostles ; commanded them not to preach, although they were convinced that the apostles preached the truth, yet they threatened them severely, if they would not desist preaching to the people. Acts iv. 40.

W. S. Were the apostles not deterred and intimidated by these threatenings ?

S. C. By no means ; but they became more zealous, and prayed more fervently, so that the house shook by the power of the Spirit.

Every heart was encouraged, and their ardour to preach the gospel increased. They performed signs and miracles—singing and preaching of what they had heard and seen—they were determined not to withhold the truth. When the high-priests perceived that their mandates were not regarded, they were enraged, collected the council, in order to consult what to do to the apostles; for that purpose they sent their guards with missile weapons, and took some of them and cast them into prison. Acts v. 17-42. But on the day following they all were astonished and afraid, when it was told them that the same men whom they had cast into prison were in the temple teaching; for none knew how they had gotten out of prison; for the doors were bolted, the watchmen were on guard. Thus miraculously did God interpose by an angel. Caiaphas sent for the apostles, entreated and threatened them that they should desist from preaching; but all was in vain; for when they determined to kill them, they were prevented by the interference of the wise men of the council. Nevertheless, the apostles were stripped and scourged; of this they rejoiced, because they were counted worthy to suffer what their Lord and master had suffered before them.

W. S. Were they so wicked as to treat those pious men in such a cruel manner?

S. C. Alas! had this been all, this would

have been but little; for shortly afterwards they murdered Stephen, a devout and pious man, dragged him out before the gate; and stoned him to death, although he kneeled down and prayed that this sin might be forgiven them, Acts vii. 54-60. But his prayer had no effect on them; they raged, and stopped their ears, and fell upon him like a set of bloodhounds, mangled his body; and as he was about expiring, he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

W. S. Alas! it is very unpleasant to listen to it. By this course of conduct, they made Jerusalem guilty of the blood of the saints: a blind man might have inferred that the vengeance of God would visit them.

S. C. They seemed not to mind all this; for they were so accustomed to flatter each other for their valour when any one was condemned to death for heresy, that this was nothing uncommon. Hence it was, that Saul, a sensible young man, born at Tarsus, and educated at Jerusalem, took so much delight in these cruel murders. Therefore did he, like an infuriated lion, enter houses, dragged out men, women, and children, and drove them, as a flock of sheep, into prison, and witnessed daily how they were bound and fettered; for here you would see one taken from his loom, there another from his anvil. In short, the Christians knew not whither to flee for refuge;

many of them followed the advice of their master, and fled into the neighbouring cities. It appeared as though the whole church would be extirpated, which had just been blossoming.

W. S. It is astonishing that not every thing perished ; for how can a flock of sheep live in the midst of a den of wolves ? they must necessarily be torn at last, where there is none to defend them, as I hear there was not to defend these.

S. C. It is true, my son ; there was none to protect them ; neither shield nor pike was raised in their defence ; only fervent prayer was resorted to in obedience to what Jesus had commanded them.

W. S. I repeat it, it is astonishing that your religion did not perish, and vanish away.

S. C. Son, you ought to know if God plants, none can root up. God fought so miraculously against these enemies, that he turned their shafts into their own faces ; for all these persecutions were subservient to the promulgation of the gospel ; yea, faith will grow and increase under the cross : to suffer persecution here directs the heart heavenward—the affections are placed on heavenly things. Were I to tell you all the wonders which took place about that time, time would fail me.

W. S. I entreat you to tell me some of them, for I am anxious to hear them.

S. C. The believers took their all, and fled into other cities, and related what they had seen and heard. There is a city north of us, situated upon a pleasant mountain, in the midst of a good country ; this city was formerly called Samaria, but now Sebastian ; it is more than thirty miles from this, it was a populous city ; thither went Philip, a devout disciple and follower of Jesus. *Acts viii. 5.* When he saw how the citizens were deceived by a sorcerer, called Simon, he began to do signs and wonders, not in flying into the air, to imitate Dedalus, but to raise up grateful hearts—to awaken the tuneful praises of cripples, lame, and blind. The one left his trade, the other his store, to see the wonders that were done ; for the cripple carried his crutches upon his shoulder, the blind had no need of a guide, the lame leaped for joy, the deaf scarce knew where he was, because he could now discern every thing by the sense of hearing ; those who were possessed of devils were no longer chained, the whole city was filled with joy and rejoicing. Every one was for uniting with Philip, seeing that Simon's sorcery was all pretence ; and there was such a pressing to hear him preach, that it appeared all the city would receive the gospel. The devoutness of those, of both men

and women, who were baptized, was unspeakably great.

W. S. The news of this must have been glad tidings to those who were at Jerusalem in distress, to hear that all the countries around them had received the gospel.

S. C. This is not all, my son; for God wrought wonders through the angels. A great distance north of us is the city Gaza: there passes by an old road down to Egypt, on the side of which ancient remains of walls and cities are to be seen. In former days the Philistines had possession of that country, who led wars against the kings of Israel; and afterwards this country was laid waste by the rude hands of the Idumeans. On this road there was a eunuch travelling in a splendid coach, who was from Ethiopia, and had come to Jerusalem to worship; and as he was returning home, he read the book of Isaiah on his way; and being troubled in his mind concerning his soul's salvation, Philip was directed by an angel to hasten hither; and immediately he joined himself to the eunuch. Their hearts were attached to one another; it appears each knew the other's thoughts; their conversation was not concerning the wind, the weather, war and commotions, or other occurrences of the day; but they conversed of that which is necessary to salvation. In passing on they came to a beautiful stream, the chariot was stopped, both

descended, and the weeping Moor was baptized in the water, and washed of an evil conscience ; he whose skin was black, was, notwithstanding, washed clean, and clothed with the white garment of righteousness. He was filled with joy and astonishment, and the more so, because he did not any longer see his teacher ; for the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.

W. S. These are astonishing wonders which you are relating !

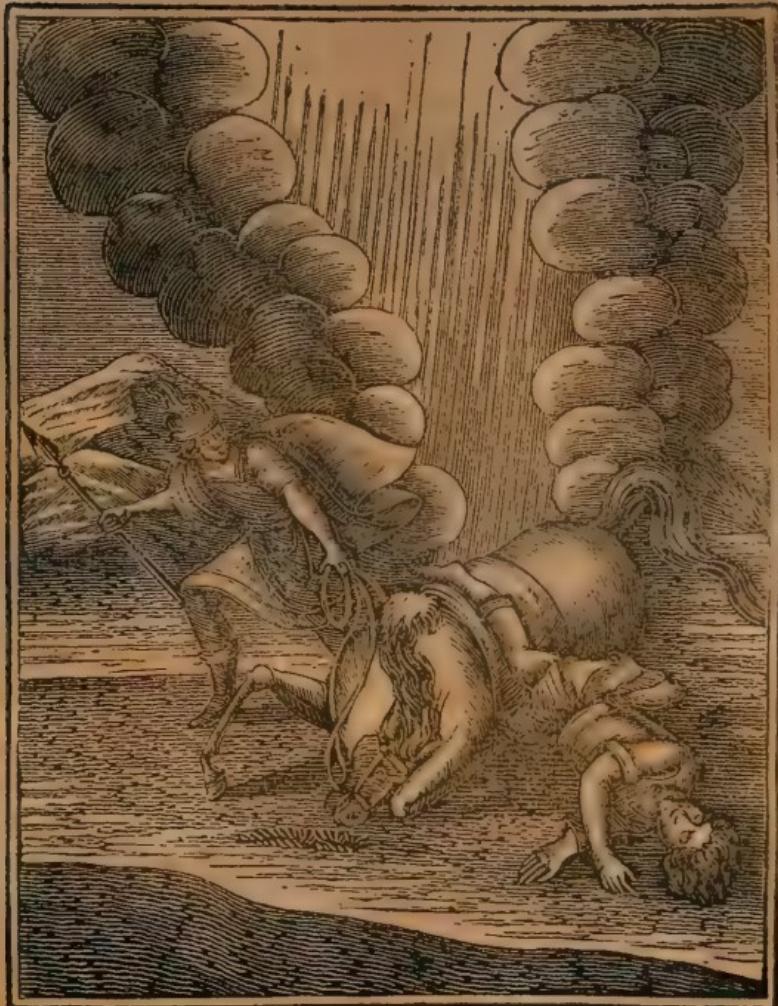
S. C. I am going to tell you a wonder nearly like it. There is another city still further north, which formerly belonged to Cæsar Augustus, hence it was called Cæsarea, and there is another town nine miles north of Cæsarea, called Joppe, on the sea-shore. There, at a certain time, two persons became intimately acquainted : what had befallen the one was disclosed to the other ; the magnetic powers of love moved one towards another, and this was done through the agency of an angel. There were to be seen the gospel heralds upon the walls of Zion—there the hearts were moved by the gentle southern breezes of the gospel—there every thing was green, like the full verdure of May : the flowers appeared upon earth, the time of the singing was come, and the voice of the turtle was heard in our land ; the fig-tree put forth her green figs, and the vine budded, and the pomegranate blossomed ; the

swords were beaten into ploughshares, and the spears were made into pruning hooks : a weaponless fisherman had more power to pierce the heart with the truth of the gospel, than those with their missile weapons. Weeping crowds of persons, desirous to hear the gospel, were in attendance. It was a glorious wonder to see them full of heavenly new wine. Afterwards they were baptized ; watered like the trees in a humid place ; they were all collected for one purpose ; and what shall I say, my son ? The cow and the bear did feed together, their young ones lay down together, the lion did eat straw like an ox ; nay, one might say that hills and dales were united by the sweet sounds of the gospel.

W. S. What a remarkable change in nature ! But did not persecution become more violent, as the gospel was spread ? Did you not tell me of a young man so enraged, that he ransacked houses to apprehend the Christians ?—did he not increase the number of his satellites, and encourage them to go on with increased rigidness ?

S. C. God directed this in a wonderful way ! Saul, whom I mentioned to you, was arrested in his mad career, and his heart was changed ; for while engaged, busily engaged, in arresting the Christians to bring them down here from other cities and towns, and standing ready with his sword at his side, and having letters to go to Damascus, and there

to apprehend all the believers. Acts ix. 1-19. Alas, he met with something unexpected ! He was prostrated by the heavenly king. He penetrated him inwards by the rays of his power ; his conscience was roused up, his hands trembled, his knees smote together, his shield and pikes fell, his satellites were amazed, and did not know the cause of it. One looked upon another ; the atmosphere appeared as all on fire ; their horses were frightened, and ran off, as though they had been wild ; and the prostrated young man was lifted up and taken to Damascus, but with quite a different account than what he expected to bring down. He entreated those for mercy whom he formerly persecuted, and of those whom he esteemed blind, he received his sight again. And after three days' affliction he arose and preached the heavenly mandates, to the astonishment of all present, for many thought he would show them chains and cords to bind the Christians with. They were astonished to see the wolf changed into a lamb. The high-priests, who were thinking he would bring many bound, were informed by the satellites what had befallen them on the way to Damascus. The perplexity this occasioned them, my son, you may readily imagine ; the council was very sorrowful ; Caiaphas was dejected ; for they knew how valorous and active Saul was in whatever he took a part.



Conversion of Saul.—pag. 386.



W. S. O, what a great discomfiture of the Pharisees and the high-priests! But I perceive from your discourse, that the believers had peace in all the cities—had they not?

S. C. O! they sang, they spake and ministered in the word of God. Their meetings were as the precious ointment of Aaron, full of sweet savour: the joy they had was not to be expressed. From the mountains flowed sweet wine, and from the hills milk, and all the brooks were filled with water!

W. S. Saul, of whom you spoke—was there nothing remarkable concerning him? Was he not a distinguished instrument in the hands of God, to spread the gospel, even as he attempted to suppress it? And had he not to experience some remarkable things, and was he not sorely persecuted? For it is rational to suppose that much is to be related of so distinguished a person.

S. C. So many remarkable things befell him, to relate all would of themselves make a long narration. However, for your edification, I will summarily tell you some of the leading facts, so that you may form some idea of what kind of man he was. Immediately after his conversion he went into Arabia, Gal. i. 17, and afterwards to Damascus again; thence to Jerusalem preaching Christ everywhere, and in the mean time suffered much persecution, and was let down over the wall in a basket, Acts ix. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33;

and he was vigilantly pursued, and his life was attempted, and he had to flee into the desert, and at last took ship on the boisterous sea, oft in jeopardy and great danger to lose his life—his whole life was a life of danger. And after he had come to Jerusalem, and saw how the Jews were filled with envy and rage at him, he departed and went to his native town, Tarsus, in Cicilia, with a view of remaining there for a short time; but a God-fearing brother, named Barnabas, could not see that so bright a light should be hid; he therefore went to Tarsus, and sought for Paul, and brought him to Antioch. Acts xi. 25–27. At that place there was a school, where the spirit of prophecy showed itself. There were Saul, now called Paul, Barnabas, Lucius, Niger, and Manaen; there Christian theology was assiduously studied, many souls were gained, and the disciples first called Christians. Thence, as a common centre, they spread abroad. Paul then sailed to Cyprus, and travelled through Pamphylia, Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, and many other places, at some of which he was received gladly and courteously, and at others he was not. He was stoned and derided on account of the Jews, who were very much enraged at him; they were his principal persecutors. Alas! it is not to be expressed what this apostle suffered; but he was always of a good cheer—strengthening

the churches everywhere; and in the council held at Jerusalem, in the tenth year of Claudius, he showed that he was none of the least of the apostles. Acts xv. 6. Afterwards he travelled to Galatia, through Phrygia, Bithynia, Macedonia, Thessalonica, Acts xvi., and ultimately to Athens, where there was a school of philosophers—the Stoicks, Epicureans, Peripatetics, who were astonished, for they were not accustomed to the bright rays of wisdom, which shone before them in the person of Paul. Acts xvii. The Corinthians were made to feel his wisdom; for their wise men were made fools. Acts xviii. The Ephesians would rather that he had not come unto them, for their Diana was being brought low. Acts xix. All Greece was in commotion on account of the miracles and doctrines of this valiant hero. The Jews dared not resist, for everywhere did he spread the fire of the gospel. In Italy, Spain, Dalmatia, Illyricum, yea, in the borders of Germany—all knew wonders to relate of him. The churches he established, the multitudes he converted, the miracles he performed, are innumerable many. For devils were dispersed, Acts xvi., the dead were raised, chap. xx., the cripples made to walk, chap. xiv., sorcerers banished, chap. xiii., fetters and chains broken asunder in prison—men came trembling before him, full of fear, not knowing whether he was a god.

or a man, on account of the wonders he did. Acts xvi. 25. Time would fail, were I to tell you of his companions, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, Silas, Apollo, Luke, Epaphras, Aristarchus, Clemens, Tychicus, Epaphroditus, Aquila, Priscilla, and many others. I rejoice to think of their love and union, of their piety and godliness. O, how many nights they spent in conversation, prayer, exhortation, and in contemplating their hopes of everlasting salvation; nothing temporal would interfere. The lusts and pleasures of this world did not lead them away from contemplating the inward comforts of their souls. Paul was often constrained through love to remain: kissing and weeping were profuse, when he was about leaving them. If you want a further account hereof, read his letters which he wrote on several occasions about that time. Those letters we read very attentively in all our meetings; they are living testimonies of his doings, and of his active mind. Besides these, there are other memorials of his greatness. The island Melita ought to be a witness of the power of his miracles; for when, on a certain occasion, having suffered shipwreck, he came on that island, and there he shook a viper into the fire, which had laid hold of his hand, without suffering any harm from it; and thus did he deprive, not only the viper, but all kind of serpents, of their venom or poison in

that island, as may be seen to this day, that persons handle serpents there without danger. Acts xxviii. 1-6.

W. S. These are not testimonies of little importance, to show the excellency of this man : and we are astonished at his zeal and activity in the Christian cause !

S. C. During thirty-six years of his apostleship, he travelled more than three thousand miles—oft by water, and oft on land ; but he preferred to travel on land : first, to visit his good friends; secondly, to enjoy his liberty the more ; for in a ship one is very frequently obliged to put up with great inconveniences—have to hear all manner of vain talk : here comes one, there another with an idle story, which is no small hindrance to a devout person, who would rather place his thoughts upon God ; therefore it is preferable to travel on land—much more agreeable for him who has his mind engaged in spiritual things, for he will have an opportunity to see the works of the Lord ; here the fruitful fields, there the green trees—at one place a high mountain, at another a deep valley ; for if we meditate upon these things, we have much reason to praise the Creator. One may learn a lesson everywhere from His works—from the universal book of creation, the heart may be kept unencumbered and free.

W. S. I agree with you in that. Let us again talk of the Jews. How did they further behave themselves towards the Christians?

S. C. Not otherwise than as tyrants; for the same reasons that they opposed Paul, did they also instigate the magistrates of the land to oppose and persecute them. For they excited King Herod Agrippa that he apprehended James the Great, and sentenced him to death. Acts xii. 2. And although he showed such an intrepidity and constancy of mind, that his accuser was struck with admiration, and became a convert to Christianity, yet he had to kneel down, and was executed with the sword; and by the shedding of his blood show what judgment was pending over Jerusalem; which the said Agrippa could not but be sensible of when his living carcass was devoured of worms at Cæsarea. Acts xii. 23. It was something remarkable, for when the king seemed to be in the midst of his glory, there was heard in the court a great cry and weeping. Every one commiserated with the king, but none could relieve him; the doctors were confounded—nobles wept at his bedside! Whom they shortly before honoured as a god, lay as a worm writhing; all the medicine he took had not its desired effect; they knew not what to think of the disease; his whole body was alive. And thus he suffered excruciatingly for five days, was eaten of

worms, and gave up the ghost, even as one of the German prisoners at Rome had prophesied to him beforehand.

W. S. These were signs which the Jews ought to have laid to heart, and have repented.

S. C. Alas! why should they repent? There was another wonder happened in the reign of Agrippa. For when Peter was cast into prison he thought of beheading him, as he did James, Acts xii. but in vain: they went to bring him out of prison; true, they found the doors bolted and the watch before them, but there was no Peter within. The chains were lying on the floor; they were alarmed at this, for the watchmen knew not how this happened; they neither heard nor saw any thing; notwithstanding, Peter, by the assistance of an angel, had made his escape. It appeared as if he had vanished from prison; or that the watchmen had been bribed, for it was done so secretly and quickly. It was generally reported among the people how miraculously Peter escaped. And thus the bigoted Pharisees were the more enraged at the apostles of the Lord, when they heard this.

W. S. And how did the apostles fare? They did not all remain at Jerusalem, did they?

S. C. No; for they were obedient to him who said, "Preach the gospel to every creature." Therefore, as soon as Paul had tra-

velled to the west, Matthew went to the south, into Ethiopia ; Bartholomew went to the east, into India ; Thomas in Parthia ; Andrew to the north, into the cold regions of Scythia ; John into the populous country of Asia : and the others likewise went abroad, and thus they were scattered throughout the greater part of the then known world, to sow the prolific seed of the gospel, confirming their preaching by signs and wonders. And inasmuch as through their preaching the idols of many were brought into disrepute, they had to suffer severe persecutions, as the Lord had told them beforehand.

W. S. One should suppose that they would have soon been exterminated through persecutions. Was their doctrine received by strange or foreign nations ?

S. C. Yes, indeed ; their doctrine made more progress than any other that was ever preached ; so that it was amazing to see how it could be preached with so much power and energy by such weak men. For neither the books of the philosophers for four hundred years, nor the law of Moses for fifteen hundred years, did effect such an extensive revolution in the minds of the people, as the apostles did, in the short space of forty years, amidst all their violent persecution. For where are Lycurgus, Solon, Pythagoras, Aristotle, and Plato ? When were the Stoicks or the Epicureans persecuted as were

the apostles? They were everywhere well received, protected, fostered, and honoured of their disciples. Likewise, the Jews had among them the sceptre and the crown for a long time—they conquered their enemies, and slew many with the sword, and used violence wherever they could. But, behold Jesus nailed to the cross; behold his apostles, one is beheaded, another crucified, another stoned to death, stabbed, or killed with a club. Behold, all them who preached the gospel were as pilgrims, persecuted as the offscourings of the earth, and notwithstanding, this heavenly doctrine was preached and promulgated in the three quarters of the globe—Asia, Europe, and Africa. Hence you may infer that their doctrine was by far more excellent than that of the philosophers. But not to digress from our point, amidst all these persecutions, I cannot forget Jerusalem, a den of thieves, exceeding every thing of the kind in enormity. Something monstrous has occurred to me, which I will relate to you.

W. S. Father, it appears to me, you are weeping.

S. C. O! the death of that righteous man, who was esteemed by every one—James the Less, my predecessor in this city.

W. S. What happened him?

S. C. The envious Sadducees, the chief of them was Ananias the high-priest, took this pious man and set him on the pinnacle

of the temple, thrust him down; his devout prayers did not affect their hearts, for they were void of the fear of God. Therefore, after having stoned him severely, so that his blood drenched the earth, a fuller came up with his club and knocked out his brains; and he gave up the ghost, as a testimony of the awaiting judgment upon Jerusalem. All who saw this scene cried out; the common people wept for him, and accused the wicked high-priests before the ruler. Many were of the opinion that it was on account of the cruel death of this man, that Jerusalem suffered this desolation. But I am of opinion that it was because they crucified the Lord Jesus, and that it was for His blood's sake. I could tell you many similar instances, but as the sun is approaching the horizon, and night will soon be at hand, we will for the present defer it—it is time that we retire.

W. S. I will not fatigue you beyond what you can bear; but will willingly wait till tomorrow.

S. C. My son, reflect well upon what you have been told—who that king is that was promised through the prophets—his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, all of which I related to you circumstantially.

W. S. Yes, indeed, you gave me a fine history.

S. C. From which you may see what kind of a person he was, who was so shamefully

murdered in this city, and that the punishment which this city incurred must be great, if there was even no other cause.

W. S. It is by no means a wonder that this city was so oft a scene of carnage.

S. C. Yes, that the city is now a heap of ruins, the relation of which will be no less astonishing to you than what you have heard. But let us now depart. I should be much pleased with your company at my house.

W. S. How can I refuse, because on my account you take so much pains, that you do not even spare your aged limbs, to give me an account of all these things. But how difficult it is to get along here, on account of the stones, thistles, and thorns.

S. C. Formerly, there were stone steps here to go up and down ; but now they are all broken. There, at that stone wall, was the royal court of David, called Millo. There, on that mountain, the tyrant Antioch built a strong fort—there you can see some of the ruins of the tower of Ophel ; and there, before us, are a few of the remains of the fortification of Antonius ; and also a few relics of the temple. Besides the court of Helen, there is the chancery, and the court-house where the unrighteous sentence was uttered against Jesus. But, behold, how it lies in ruins ; and what does all their weeping and lamentation avail ? Ah ! they would fain wish they had then wept, and not have accused Jesus. You

can also see three towers west of us, called Hypicus, Phaselis, and Mariamne: there was the court of Herod, where not a little pride and voluptuousness were practised. It was a splendid palace, but now it is the hiding place for ravens, cranes, owls, and bats. Alas! how all things perish! Here is my cottage, where I reside.

W. S. This is like the cottages of the ancestors, who were pilgrims upon earth.

S. C. That is true. I live of my garden. I have in it all kinds of vegetables.

W. S. Father, I see that you are content with little; farewell! By to-morrow, if the Lord will, I will return again. I must now retire to meditate upon these things in some solitary place.

DIALOGUE VI.

[THE FOURTH PART OF THIS DIALOGUE, GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE DREADFUL DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, AND OF JUDEA, AND THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TILL THE YEAR A.D. 109, COMPRISING A PERIOD OF SEVENTY YEARS.]

Wandering Soul. THERE are everywhere so many mounds and molehills here, as if a whole army were buried here. If it be agreeable to the old father, will you please to

give me some account of these. Here I come before his door, but it appears there is an agreeable sound within doors, and not to molest him, I will go to our former elevated place. Behold, what broken walls are all around us. This must formerly have been a glorious and populous country, this we can see at the remains thereof; for as far as we can see, there are to be seen broken towers, houses, and villas; and if the trees were not intercepting we could see much, and many more; and if I am not deceived, I think I see far east of us, blue water. I should not suppose that all that is inundated land. I wish that the old man would come; he would give me an account of all those things; for I am very anxious to know all about them. There he is coming, leaning upon his staff; to be such an old man, he is yet quite sensible; he hears and sees well; he is quite an eloquent man, his conversation is interesting to listen to. You are welcome, father; the Lord be your comforter.

S. C. I thank you, my son, for the salutation. Had you no desire?

W. S. Not a little, yet as I thought, in passing your house, that you were engaged in a good work, and were not mispending your time, I came on.

S. C. My son, it is customary with us to assemble frequently in the morning, to praise

the Lord, to pray with each other, to exhort each other to remain steadfast in the faith, and to keep ourselves unspotted of the world, waiting for the appearance of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will come again even as we saw him ascend; and we strive to that end, that we may be prepared, by a holy walk and conversation, and especially in these times, because we are not secure one hour; for since Trajan* has reigned, we hear of nothing else than of killing, hanging, strangling, crucifying, beheading, burning, and all manner of torments are inflicted upon the pious, and for no other cause than that because we preach the resurrection of Christ, and renounce and denounce the dumb idols. On that account we are always in fear of being apprehended and crucified, as was our Lord, or to be murdered in some other way; therefore we have much cause to prepare ourselves for the event daily.

W. S. What a great reason this is to live as strangers in this world; but it is also a

* Trajan wrote to Jerusalem, and gave orders to exterminate the stock of David; in consequence of which, all that could be found of that race were put to death. By his order, Phocas, bishop of Pontus, was cast into a hot lime-kiln. He also commanded the martyrdom of Ignatius, who, it is said, was the person, when an infant, Christ took into his arms and showed him to his disciples, as one that would be a pattern of humility and innocence. He also commanded that Symphorosa, a widow, and her seven sons, should be sacrificed to heathen deities. Trajan died, A. D. 117, after having carried on a persecution against the Christians with great violence for several years.—*Trans.*

shameful tyranny on the part of the government.

S. C. The government or chief magistrate is sometimes little to blame. The emperor Trajan was otherwise a good man; but he was seduced of his priests, like Pilate was of Caiaphas and his associates. And because this city was the cause of the shedding of the innocent blood, she was suddenly visited with judgments—as sudden as the coming of lightning.*

W. S. Father, before you progress further with this history, be pleased to tell me, in the first place, what water is that far south of us; it appeared when the sun was rising to be as red as blood, caused by the reflection of the rays of the sun. Is it inundated land, being overflowed by the breaking down of dams during wars?

S. C. That water,† my son, might have served this city as a warning and a dreadful beacon of their destruction, if they only would have regarded it. Formerly it was a pleasant and fertile country, abounding with all manner of fruit trees, meadows, grain fields, vineyards, and every thing else that the eye could wish to see—also handsomely

* The destruction of the Jews was sudden. In a very short time not less than eleven hundred thousand perished. See *Josephus, de Bell, Ind. lib. 6, c. 9, § 3.—Trans.*

† Dead Sea, Sea of Sodom, Salt Sea, or Lake of Asphaltites, salt lake, is the water alluded to. It is seventy miles long, and ten or fifteen broad.—*Trans.*

built towns; for there were formerly five cities there, filled with jovial citizens, who did not know what to do on account of their wealth and grandeur, which caused them to be wanton, dissolute, proud, unchaste, avaricious, grinding the poor without mercy for their poverty. It appeared to be the most happy country in the world: but alas! unexpectedly a sore judgment was sent upon them.

W. S. What judgment?

S. C. In one of those cities there lived a very pious man called Lot; he was Abraham's brother's son. It was in the days of Abraham. He wept daily on account of their dancing, swearing, eating and drinking to excess, and many other evil deeds of the inhabitants, all of which he was obliged daily to see. He often attempted to instruct them, but they esteemed him as one that was of a gloomy mind—a fool. At a certain time two angels, in the form of men, came unto him, Gen. xix. 1–13, whom he kindly received; but when they saw the wickedness of the city, they published unto the citizens the pending judgment, telling them that it was high time to leave the city, for God was about destroying it. But when Lot had admonished his friends, his brothers-in-law and relations, they only laughed at him, Gen. xix. 14; for they said, it is impossible, because this man only commenced

yesterday building a house; that one has commenced sowing his fields, and is expecting a rich harvest next year; and in another house there is a wedding; here the lords of the land have met to adjust temporal matters; another is engaged at his trade, one is spinning; there they are engaged in mercantile business, for the business never afforded a greater profit than it does this year; the merchant-house is crowded with people; the inns are filled to overflowing with guests. Every one is merry; there is neither war nor disturbance in the land; all are living in the enjoyment of peace and plenty. Whence should this destruction come? It is all a tale that is in your head. And the pious man left them with a sorrowful heart. Afterwards he was commanded of the angels, Gen. xix. 13-23, to go out of the city and the country, with his wife and two daughters, to travel on without looking back, that they might escape with their lives. Scarce had they left the city, when the atmosphere was filled with fire. It began to thunder and to lighten, and the vivid flashes of lightning set all on fire. Then weeping and wailing commenced in the city. They looked upon each other with horror; for they saw their costly houses burn over their heads, their drawings and pictures in their parlours defaced, their money was melted into bullion. Whether they went into or out of their houses, nothing

but weeping and lamentation was heard. If they stretched their hands heavenward, they were immediately burned; they could not screen themselves from the intense heat. Their grain and fruit were burnt in the fields; the trees not only shed their leaves, but their limbs also; the pools and rivers seemed as though they were changed into brimstone and pitch—like a crucible in which a mixture of every thing is melted. Thus were men, animals, creatures of every kind, herbs, metal, stone, buildings and every thing of the kind, changed into a pool of fire, so that nothing could be discovered but the ascending smoke in thick curling columns, like the smoke of a furnace in which metal is melted; and thus their joy and pleasure were changed into a sorrowful tragedy! Lot's wife did not fare well either, because her heart was attached to the possessions which they had left in the city, and contrary to the command of the angels, she looked back, nor could she then look forward to follow her husband. Alas! soon she was convinced how much depends upon being obedient. Weeping and lamentation availed her not. How suddenly she was deprived of her existence, for her eyes lost their sight, her arms and legs became stiff, her whole body became senseless—she was changed into a pillar of salt, Gen. xix. 26: she must stand for an everlasting monument. Alas

if the Jews had taken these things to heart, their hearts would never have become as hard as a flinty rock. This is the origin of that water which you see at a distance.

W. S. Father, you have told me a remarkable history!

S. C. Yes, but one that is no less dreadful Alas! I often wished that this wicked city had only laid these things to heart; if they had, they would have not been punished as you see they are.

W. S. Since you have given me a very satisfactory account of the causes of the destruction of this city, please to tell me what were the means employed to effect this destruction.

S. C. My son, you ought to know that many drops had fallen as harbingers of the coming shower which was to inundate the whole country. In the first place, about six years after the passion of Christ, Caius Caligula, requested that his image should be placed in the temple; for he desired to be worshipped as a god. This caused a great distress and disturbance among the Jews: they entreated Petronius (the emperor's general) that he should desist doing so. But when he threatened them with death, they stretched their necks to him, and were willing to die. This caused much sorrowing through all the country, so that no labour was performed for the space of fifty days, and the

fields were left unsowed. And this uproar would not have ceased had it not ceased through the death of the emperor ; for Caius threatened them with much severity till he died. Thus the Jews had to suffer for what they said to Pilate—" We have no king but the emperor." Alas ! they might well have desired to have had Jesus as their emperor ; but it was in vain—now they must needs be satisfied with their emperor. Afterwards, in the days of Claudius, when Cumanus was governor in Judea, it happened on an Easter-day, that the soldiers who were stationed at fort Antonia offered the Jews an indignity. As they were going to the temple to sacrifice, one of the soldiers presented his naked posteriors to them insultingly, which they violently resented. Some threw stones at the soldiers ; but upon the approach of the Romans in great force, their terror was so excessive, and so disorderly and precipitate their flight, that no less than ten thousand Jews were trodden to death in the streets, which occasioned great weeping and lamentation. At another place a soldier burnt the holy Scriptures, and there was also a Jew slain, who was from Galilee, going to the temple (he was murdered in the country of the Samaritans) ; and because Cumanus did nowhere punish any for committing these outrages, which again occasioned a great uproar, the Jews were determined to avenge themselves

of these outrages by plundering and firing their oppressors' possessions. Cumanus, on the other hand, collected forces, and apprehended many of those that occasioned seditions, which occasioned great lamentation throughout the land, for they were in arms against each other, and none knew how it would end.* At last came Quadratus, the governor of Syria, and had many of the Jews crucified, and beheaded eighteen of their leaders.

W. S. It appears that those eighteen were to fill the number of the years which the emperor Tiberius reigned, when Jesus was crucified, and had to suffer, innocently, for the wantonness and cruelty that was shown to Jesus when he was crucified so cruelly.

S. C. This is not said without some foundation, for they were not of the number who cried out, "Crucify him! crucify him!" for they suffered this of Cumanus, because they defended the law. Besides the aforementioned, there arose another molestation; for there were secret murderers, called *Sicari*;

* Not long before this period a great number of Jews, on account of a pestilence which raged at Babylon, removed from that city to Seleucia, where the Greeks and Syrians rose against them and destroyed more than five myriads of them. Josephus says, "The extent of this slaughter had no parallel in any former period of their history." About five years after this dreadful massacre, there happened a severe contest between the Jews at Parea, and the Philadelphians, respecting the limits of a city called Mia (Cuspius Fadus was procurator), in which many of the former were slain.—See Josephus's *Antiq.* lib. 20, c. i., § 1.—*Trans.*

they carried missile weapons concealed, and mingled with the multitude, and stabbed those with great dexterity against whom they had a grudge, and then concealed their foul outrages by weeping, and feigning to be ignorant of what happened. None were secure against them, no matter how respectable or influential soever ; for they slew even Jonathan, the high-priest, Caiaphas's successor. This caused great alarm and fear among them. But it was a just punishment ; for they preferred a murderer to be released before Jesus. Now they received the recompence of their unrighteous choice. Others led the people into the wilderness—promised them their liberty if they would fight against the Romans.* Among others there was a false prophet in Egypt, who collected four thousand of such murderers :† daily were their flags seen, villages burning here and there ; houses were plundered, and the goods stolen ; daily did seditions increase, and discord be-

* Josephus informs us, that there were many who pretended to be inspired, and deceived many people ; leading out numbers into deserts, that they would there show them signs of liberty—meaning redemption from the Roman yoke, which things the Jews expected the Messiah would do for them. Josephus, *de Bell.* lib. 2, c. xiii., § 4, 5.—*Trans.*

† Josephus informs us that an Egyptian false prophet led 30,000 into the desert, who were almost entirely cut off by Felix, the Roman procurator. And that in the reign of Claudius, “the land was overrun with magicians, seducers, and impostors, who drew the people after them in multitudes into solitudes and deserts, to see the signs and miracles which they promised to show by the power of God.” Josephus, *Antiq.* lib. 20. c. viii. § 6.—*Trans.*

came more prevalent ; so that these wretched people did not know whither to flee for refuge. All these were but the beginning of tribulation, as Jesus had predicted. Matt xxiv. 7. Mark xiii. 7. Luke xxi. 9.

W. S. That was a sorrowful beginning. But could not the Romans with their forces suppress these insurrections ?

S. C. It was impossible ; for none can resist the omnipotent arm of God. True, Felix, who was appointed governor by Nero, about thirty-two years after the ascension of Christ, slew some of these murderers, and so did Festus after him. But it did not avail any thing ; the wrath of God was enkindled against them ; for they did not reform, but continued to be cruel and bloodthirsty in persecuting the apostles and other pious persons.

W. S. Father, is that possible ?

S. C. The cruelties which they practised upon the distinguished apostle Paul, are not to be described, who was at this time on a visit to his brethren at Jerusalem. They persecuted him even unto death ; neither vindication nor innocence could prevail with them, they raved like demoniacs, cast dust into the air, and appeared as though they would devour him. The bailiffs knew not whence these madmen came. They interfered, and tried to quiet them ; but neither Felix, nor Festus, nor Agrippa could quench this fire.

It appears they were instigated thereto by the vengeance of God : they desisted not till the holy apostle left the country, and was taken a prisoner to Rome, where he was laid in chains,—with a chain on one hand, whereby his keeper led him about, into and out of the prison when it was required. But they could not prevent the gospel from being promulgated ; for the letters which he wrote in his bonds served to comfort and strengthen the believers. But, by this course of procedure they showed that they were more cruel and tyrannical than the heathens themselves.*

W. S. These were perhaps only the ruder or baser sort of them, and none of the more respectable.

S. C. They were the very flower, and most respectable part of them ; namely, the high-priests, elders, and scribes, and chief of the people ; for it happened four years before the high-priest Ananus showed his cruelty towards James the Lesser, as I have told you. How could God be merciful towards such a city ? A city that would not reform, but accumulated sin upon sin until they had filled their cup of iniquity.

W. S. Thus I hear that all things conspired to the destruction of Jerusalem.

* After the death of Jesus Christ, the apostles suffered every evil which the malice of the Jews could invent, and their mad zeal execute. Paul, by the order of Nero, was beheaded, about A. D. 69, or 70.—*Trans.*

S.C. Yes, the longer the more, my son. After Festus, in the fifth year of the reign of Nero, Albinus was sent as governor to Judea: from that time forth it was observed that not only the murderers which infested the country were harassing the people, but also the magistrates of the country began to be troublesome; for this Albinus sought or cared for nothing, except to fill his coffers with money. He raised heavy taxes; for the sake of money he encouraged all manner of villany; so that wantonness prevailed. The pious were compelled to hold their peace, and the insolent profligates were permitted to indulge in rioting, plundering, and excess. The pontifical office greatly declined; for the high-priest Ananias, who was a whitened wall, bought himself the favour and protection of Albinus by giving him presents and gifts. He had wanton and dissolute servants, who associated with the lowest class of plunderers; they ransacked barns, and took the tithes which belonged to the priests, treated those with cruel violence who would resist them; so that many of the priests had to suffer hunger, and endure great anxiety. All the plagues followed one another. In order that God might show that he was determined utterly to destroy Jerusalem; and to that end, he gave them seven several signs, to warn each one in the city of the coming destruction.

W. S. Father, will you have the goodness to relate them in order?

S. C. For the first, a meteor appeared, resembling a sword hanging over Jerusalem during one whole year.* This unusual sign made many afraid and faint-hearted, except those whose hearts were hardened, who still encouraged war. Afterwards at the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour, or at three o'clock in the morning, there shone round about the altar, and the circumjacent buildings of the temple, a light equal to the brightness of the sun. This light continued for thirty minutes. At the same feast, as the high-priests were leading a heifer to be sacrificed, she brought forth a lamb, in the midst of the temple. Also about the sixth hour of the night, the eastern gate of the temple, made of solid brass, was seen to open without human assistance, which required twenty men to close it every evening.† Soon after the feast of the passover, in various parts of the country, before the setting sun, chariots and armed men were seen in the air, passing round about Jerusalem, which was very alarming to behold. At the subsequent feast of Pentecost, while the priests were going, by

* Our Lord and Saviour said, "And fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Luke xxi. 11.—*Trans.*

† This gate could not have been opened "by a strong gust of wind, or a slight earthquake;" for Josephus says it was secured by iron bolts and bars, which were let down into a large threshold, consisting of one entire stone.—*Trans.*

night, into the inner temple to perform their customary ministrations, they first felt, as they said, a shaking, accompanied by an indistinct murmuring, and afterwards voices of a multitude, saying, in a distinct and earnest manner, "Let us go hence." As the last and most fearful sign, a farmer's son, called Jesus, whose father's name was Ananus, during the feast of the tabernacles, suddenly exclaimed in the temple, "A voice from the east—a voice from the west—a voice from the four winds—a voice against Jerusalem—a voice against bridegrooms and brides—a voice against the whole people." These words he incessantly proclaimed aloud, both day and night, through all the streets of Jerusalem, for seven years and five months together,* until the city was besieged, as I am going to tell you : he went about, and when he was interrogated, he replied only, "Wo ! wo ! to Jerusalem !" At length, he ascended the walls, and in a more powerful voice than ever, exclaimed, "Wo ! wo to the city ! wo to this temple ! wo to this people !" and as he was being shot with an arrow, he cried, "Wo ! wo

* Commencing A. D. 62, at a time when the city was in a state of peace, and overflowing with prosperity, and terminating amidst the horrors of the siege. This Jesus, having excited the attention of the magistracy, was brought before Albinus, the Roman governor, who commanded that he should be scourged, but the severest stripes drew from him neither tears nor supplications,—he never thanked those who relieved him, neither did he complain of the injustice of those who struck him.—*Trans.*

to myself!" All this crying was from God, as a warning to the people, as a sure prediction of the impending tribulations.

W. S. These are all prodigious signs. But were there none that believed them, and retired from the city?

S. C. Alas! why should they? Many gave it a false interpretation: this was according to the custom of the ancient pseudo prophets, who comforted the people in their misery. None regarded it, except a few of ours, called Christians, who bore it in mind that the Lord Jesus had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and commanded them, when they would see the beginning of tribulations, to go out of Judea. And thus they went all out of Judea, and went on the other side of Jordan, into a village called Pella,* where they remained unmolested during all the tribulations—sitting as it were, under the shadow of a tree, screening them from the intense heat of the sun, or under the roof of a house protected from the storms and floods of rain.

* Pella, a place beyond Jordan, situated in a mountainous country. Such was our Lord's admonition, "Let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." Matt. xxiv. 16-22. To this place, according to Eusebius, who resided near the spot, the Christians came from Jerusalem, and settled, before the war under Vespasian began; and thus marvellously escaped the general shipwreck of Jerusalem and the surrounding country; for we do not read anywhere that a single Christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem. *Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 6. Epiphanius adversus Nazaræas, lib. 1. § 7.—Trans.*

W. S. This I have all understood. But if you please, tell me how the punishments followed these signs?

S. C. After Albinus, Florus was made governor in the ninth year of Nero, and the thirty-second after the ascension of Christ. He was more cruel than his predecessor : he strove with all his powers to excite the Jews to an insurrection, who were prone thereto, so that nothing could persuade them to the contrary. So that on a certain day there was an uproar between the Jews and the Gentiles, at Cæsarea, on the seaside. The Jews paid Florus eight talents to assist them, but he did not do it; whereupon some of them mocked him, by holding collections as if they were collecting money for Florus. This irritated him so much, that he came with great forces up against Jerusalem. However, the Jews went out to meet him, salute him, and reconcile him ; but he was not to be reconciled. He scorned their overtures, and repelled them by force, so that those who made good their retreat came into the city in great sorrow. When he had followed them into the city, armed, he sat upon the judgment-seat, called for his enemies, threatened them severely, and commanded his soldiers to plunder that part of the city where these lived, slew many of the citizens, and had many of the more noble crucified, which was a dreadful spectacle to behold. None could pre-

vail upon him to desist from his cruel tyranny; neither could queen Bernice, sister of Agrippa, prevail on him, although she entreated him pitifully in her bare feet. This incensed the seditious part the more. They reviled Florus, and called him an infamous character, so that the high-priests, who had undertaken to reconcile the parties, could scarce with much entreaty quiet them. Afterwards he assembled the chief of the Jews, and proposed to them that if they would receive his soldiers, which he shortly expected from Cæsarea, gladly, he would on his part make honourable amends, and restore all. The priests and Levites prevailed upon the Jews, by singing psalms, to concede to this proposition. After they were persuaded with much difficulty to consent to meet the Romans, all was useless, for they were treated with insolent contempt. And as the turbulent Jews began to upbraid them, the Romans made ready for battle, and slaying and killing without mercy. In the midst of this consternation, those who fled to the city crowded so thick upon each other that they trod one another to death. There was a great cry in the city, for the Romans made a violent push to take possession of the temple and of fort Antonia. But the seditious Jews resisted, got upon the roofs of houses, shot arrows, threw stones, till the Romans were obliged to retreat. These were the

beginnings of revolting from the Romans. This happened in the twelfth year of the reign of Nero, and about thirty-three years after the crucifixion of Christ, and three years before their total destruction, or about the same space of time that Jesus travelled and preached the gospel, during which he suffered much persecution, and the most excruciating death.

W. S. These punishments appear to have been ordained. Nevertheless, I have to inquire, were there none in authority that could have quelled this increasing flame ?

S. C. Attempts of the kind were made ; for king Agrippa, and Cestius, president of Syria, were engaged in quelling them. Cestius commanded his captain, Neapolitanus, to inquire into the conduct of Florus ; which ought to have satisfied them. Agrippa delivered a long oration, exhorting the Jews to submit to the Romans, whom the Macedonian kingdom could not resist ; nay, Athens, and Lacedæmon had to yield to them ; they extended the borders of their kingdom into Thrace, Illyricum, Germany, France, Spain, and beyond the sea to Britain, and made tributary the Egyptians. The powerful kings of Asia had to succumb to them, they were a scourge to the invincible Parthian king : the borders of their kingdom extended north, south, east, and west, and there was not a

nation or potentate upon earth that dared to resist the Romans. That if they did not wish to see their city wholly destroyed, they should immediately abandon their undertaking, otherwise the city and the temple will be destroyed. This had some effect upon them. If they looked upon their ruined buildings it appeared to them that all these things might be possible; and it had some appearance that they would be reconciled. But when Agrippa began to urge them to be subject to Florus, they again became turbulent, began to throw stones. Every one trembled for fear, so that the king was obliged to flee the city with precipitancy. Whereupon arose a presumptuous young man, Eleazar, the son of Ananias the high-priest; he laid the foundation for a complete revolt; for he said that sacrifice should be made for none except for the Jews only, and consequently the emperor's offering was also rejected, which was hitherto customary in the temple to accept of it. The high-priests and Pharisees resisted this with vehemence, invited soldiers from Agrippa's and Florus's army, and then ensued a bloody contest. The seditious Jews took possession of the temple, of fort Antonia, and the royal palace, which they set on fire, burnt up all the books, registers, and chronicles therein; the others took possession of the upper part of the city, and fought seven

days together, that the blood flowed in the streets.* Among whom also robbers mingled, stabbing them in great numbers ; one crying, another gnashing his teeth, another looking up towards heaven, stretching out their arms, streaming with blood. Thus they weltered in their own blood, without knowing whither to flee for refuge. But this was nothing less than the righteous hand of God. Now they might reflect upon their conduct towards Jesus, when they mocked and insulted him while in agonies on the cross, and that the righteous blood which the Jews shed was now avenging itself. Even as they shed the blood of many holy persons, so were they now murdered of the Sicari and other murderers, like it happened unto Ananias the high-priest, and his brother Ezekias, who were slain of Mamamus and his banditti.

W. S. Father, was this uproar only confined to Jerusalem ?

S. C. It was like a fire breaking out in

* While Jerusalem was a prey to these ferocious and devouring factions, every part of Judea was scourged and laid waste by bands of robbers and murderers, who plundered towns, and in case of resistance, slew the inhabitants, not sparing either women or children. Simon, son of Georas, the commander of one of these bands, at the head of 40,000 banditti, having with some difficulty entered Jerusalem, gave birth to a third faction, and the flame of discord blazed out anew, with still more destructive fury. These, rendered frantic by rage and desperation, trampled on heaps of slain, fought against each other with brutal savagery and madness. The bodies of the dead were heaped together, and a lake of blood stagnated in the sacred courts.—*Trans.*

the inner part of a house, and afterwards is blown upon at all sides by the wind. The mutinous part of them were busily engaged in their expeditions, and took possession of many cities. For instance, Massada, which was a strongly fortified place; also, Macherunta, where John the Baptist was beheaded; besides Sebastia, Ascalon, Philadelphia, Ptolemy, Anthedon, Gaza, and others, some of which they burnt, and took possession of others, and drove the Romans out of them. But as soon as this report was spread abroad, the Romans fell upon the Jews, and in several cities slew a great number of them. In Cæsarea, 20,000;* at Scythopolis, 13,000;† at Alexandria, 50,000;† at Damascus, 10,000;§ and at Joppa, 8,000—men, women, and children; so that this city was taken by surprise of the Romans. You may readily imagine the lamentations, misery, the cry of agony everywhere. How sad the farmer was to see his grain trampled under foot; the merchant had to hear daily of his goods being stolen; the mechanic was deprived of his earnings; yea, one friend had no disposition to visit another, on account of the awaiting dangers from the *Sicari*,|| murderer and robbers, lying in ambush. Nay, what is still

* Josephus. de Bell. Ind. lib. 6, c. ix. sec. 3.

† Ibid. lib. 2, c. xiv. sec. 3. ‡ Ibid. sec. 3. § Ibid. c. xx. sec. 2.

|| *Sicari*, murderers, who, under the pretence of the law, thought themselves authorized to commit any outrage.—*Trans.*

worse, in their cruel fights, they had to see their fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters killed without being able to offer them help.

W. S. These were indeed cruel and inhuman; but I want to know more of the history of Jerusalem.

S. C. Afterwards it happened that Cestius Gallus, president of Syria, marched a large army towards this city. He plundered and burnt all where he came to,* so that many fled into the mountains to hide themselves, as long as they could. They all dreaded the arrival of Cestius, yet they resisted him as he advanced towards Jerusalem. He then encamped at length at the distance of about one mile from Jerusalem; after lying there three days, he marched towards the city. The seditious fled into the inner city, and if God had not designed to destroy the city utterly, Cestius, by the aid of other citizens, might have put an end to those seditious ones, and the city would have been saved; but he was intimidated.† He fled, and the Jews followed him. His whole emcampment was in jeopardy, so that he escaped with difficulty, and went towards Cæsarea.

* He burnt Zabulon, Joppa, and all the villages which lay in his way. At Joppa, he slew of the inhabitants eight thousand four hundred. He laid waste the district of Narbatine, and sending an army into Galilee, slew there two thousand of the seditious Jews. He burnt the city of Lydda, and repulsed the Jews.—*Trans.*

† This was done by the treacherous persuasions of his own officers.—*Trans.*

The Jews, however, pursued, plundering and slaying all they could find;* and this victory inspired them with courage, so that there were no hopes to quiet them at all. Some of the more discerning left the city at this time,† because it was impossible to resist such a powerful people as the Romans, with such desperates as the mutinous Jews were.

W. S. These did like Lot, who went out of Sodom when the judgment was at hand. But did the seditious Jews not lay these things to heart? for, as I perceive from your discourse, the farmer's son, Jesus, still cried, "Wo, wo, to Jerusalem!"

S. C. What makes you ask this question? This was the least of their thoughts. They regarded him as a madman. What he said was considered all lies, in relation to the overthrow of this city—like the prediction of the prophet Jeremiah, when he prophesied touching Babylon. Therefore, did they everywhere increase their forces, appointed captains (generals) over each quarter: namely, Joseph, a son of Gorias, and Ananias the high-priest, to have the command of this city; Jesus, son of Saphas, and Eleazar, over the country of Idumea; Josephus, son of Simo-

* They pursued him as far as Antipatris, and slew of his army nearly six thousand men.—*Trans.*

† Josephus informs us, that immediately after this disaster had befallen Cestius, "Many of the principal Jewish people forsook the city, as men do a sinking ship." Josephus, *de Bell.* lib. 2, c. xix. § 6, c. xx. § 1.—*Trans.*

nis, over Jericho; John Esseus, over Thama Lida, Joppa, and Emaus; John, the son of Ananias, over the Grophonites and Acrabatenians; Josephus (the historian), son of Matthias, had the command of Upper and Lower Galilee. All these generals were gallant men. They fortified the city, repaired the walls thereof, and guarded every fortress; prepared for the Romans, whose arrival they expected, and which caused great fear among the common people. In the mean time, they were not unmolested by the robbers and murderers in the country; for Simon,* son of Gorias, a proud and mutinous commander of a banditti, plundered and burnt all the villages as he passed along. And when the high-priests resisted him, he went to the robbers at Massada,† to take refuge in an impregnable fortification. Especially did he pass through Idumea, which obliged them to garrison every place. You may readily imagine the misery and wretchedness this occasioned everywhere.

W. S. But what did the Romans do?

S. C. The emperor Nero was at this time in Achaia; and when he heard of Cestius's defeat, and how the Jews were preparing for war, he held a council to determine upon a suitable person to send and conquer the

* We mentioned him in a preceding note.—*Trans.*

† At Massada nine hundred and sixty were slain. Josephus, de Bell. Ind. lib. 6, c. ix. § 1.—*Trans.*

Jews. Vespasian, a man of tried valour, was appointed. He collected a great force out of every adjacent city and country, and arrived at Ptolemais* (in the 13th year of Nero), a city on the seashore opposite Galilee. His son Titus soon joined him with a great force; nearly 60,000 tried soldiers were encamped. This caused great fear through all the land; they knew not whither to flee. Everywhere were heard the beating of drums and the sound of trumpets; the banners were unfurled; the reined horses began to trot and tread loud; the soldiers, in full armour, marched through the land, spreading the most cruel havoc and devastation—plundering and robbing as they went. One fled to the mountain; another into caverns; a third into a strongly fortified city. Full of fear, of deep anxiety, they were seen to flee for life. There was general consternation; for if they fled from the sword, they fled into the hands of murderers, who assaulted all with fury. They knew not what alternative to choose—to surrender to the enemy, or to adhere to the mutinous party. Those at Sephoria surrendered themselves to the Romans;† but they who resisted were slain by the Romans. All in Gadara were

* From this place he marched into Judea, in the spring of 76,
A. D.—*Trans.*

† Above two thousand were slain. See Josephus, *de Bell. Ind.* lib. 6, c. ix. § 11.—*Trans.*

murdered. Joppa, after a long siege, was stormed and taken, and 40,000 of its inhabitants were killed; some of whom had fled into cellars, vaults, and caverns, but were most cruelly murdered; others killing one another, or committing suicide in despair. Here Josephus was taken prisoner in the attempt of fleeing. He was brought before the emperor, who had him well secured. The Romans also subdued other cities, namely, Tiberias, Tarichea, Gamala, Gischala. The scenes of carnage and consequent misery that were occasioned are not to be fully described, for many of the Jews killed themselves; others did not even spare their fathers, mothers, brothers, or sisters, but beheaded them as pigeons, and threw them upon heaps, as was done at Scythopolis and other places. It induces shuddering to hear of those distressing abominations of madness rather than acts of prudence. They appeared to be possessed of infernal furies; for these were the days of wrath of which Christ had prophesied, that they would come. O! how blessed were they that had no children born, and the women that gave no suck; for the misery that existed then among the weeping mothers, leading their children by their trembling hands through the country, cannot be expressed; for they had to be afraid that they would either be killed by the robbers, or sold to the Romans, to be slaves for ever.

W. S. O dangerous times! How did it terminate with Jerusalem?

S. C. Things had a bad appearance on account of the prevailing dissensions; for the zealots, or robbers, acted abominably in the city, robbed houses, and killed many of the chief citizens. Ananus, the high-priest, resisted them most powerfully; but the zealots, to secure themselves, took possession of the temple and the sanctuary, and profaned the divine service, committing all manner of licentious acts; ordained a high-priest of their own choice, who was not of the tribe of Levi, not according to custom, but by casting lots, which fell upon a rustic farmer, who was accordingly inducted into office. Whereupon Ananus advised the people to resist by force, which occasioned much confusion, inasmuch as a volley of stones was thrown, and flew as thick as hail in every direction; swords were laid hold of, and there ensued a general slaughter. The blood flowed so profusely, that the holy temple was altogether polluted.* The zealots were driven into the inner court of the temple, and the gates guarded by 6000 armed citizens. In the mean time, a presumptuous man, named John of Gischala, pretended to

* The conflict was one of brutal savageness and madness. Even such as brought sacrifices to the temple were murdered. The dead bodies of priests and worshippers, both natives and foreigners, were heaped together, and a lake of blood stagnated in the sacred courts.

—Trans.

restore peace between the dissentious factions; but he deceived the people, and secretly advised the Idumeans to assist the zealots, saying that Ananus was ready to surrender the city to the Romans. These came before the city with 20,000 men; but the citizens guarded the gates—preventing them entrance. Afterwards there arose in the night a tempestuous hurricane, accompanied with thunder and vivid flashes of lightning, storms, rain, and earthquakes.* In the midst of this tumult, the zealots assaulted the guards, opened the gates for the Idumeans to enter, who, as soon as they were inside the gates, commenced a dreadful slaughter among the citizens; for, being surrounded by their enemies, they could not escape. In the outer temple the blood was running in torrents; for in the morning, the number of the slain was not less than 8500. Afterwards they ransacked the houses; killed Ananus the high-priest, together with the other priests, and left their carcasses lie in the streets to be devoured of dogs. Then they fell upon the citizens generally, and killed them unmercifully like brutes, till 12,000 had fallen victims to their barbarous cruelty. They were no respecters of persons, neither did they regard justice nor equity, but

* Taciti Annales, lib. 14, c. xxvii. same book 15, c. xxii. and it is properly the same as mentioned by Seneca, Nat. Quæst. lib. 6, c. i.
—Trans.

slew all indiscriminately they found or met with. Here was one, named Zacharias, for whom they lay in wait, and afterwards brought charges against him. Although he was pronounced innocent, and acquitted by the judges, yet they killed him, and drove the judges out of the temple. This was the condition of the city before it was besieged.

-W. S. It appears to me, that I feel my hair stand mountainward, in listening to the narration of these abominations. Jesus, on coming down from the mountain, did not prophesy in vain ; for he foresaw these things in the spirit.

S. C. You may well say so. Besides this, there was another evil existing. No one was secure from the robbers ; for as soon as they heard of any one that was favourable to the Romans, they esteemed him a traitor, and killed him cruelly, and left him lie in the open street. Nor would they suffer any one to bury the carcasses ; so that the streets were crowded with dead bodies, and the stench was nearly intolerable ! A dreadful spectacle for the living to behold ! so that they considered themselves more wretched than the dead, especially on account of the cruel and barbarous treatment they met with in prisons.* John of Gischala laid plots

* They slaughtered the common people as unfeelingly as if they had been a herd of the vilest beasts. The nobles they imprisoned, then scourged them ; and when they could not get them to join in

and plans to succeed to be governor of the city. However, Eleazer, a reputable citizen, opposed and resisted him with some of the nobility and part of the zealots, for they were determined not to yield to John of Gischala, the tyrant, which occasioned daily much shedding of blood.

W. S. But what did the Romans do, for they did not remain quiet all this time?

S. C. These advanced nearer and nearer to Jerusalem. They took possession of Jericho, and killed those who had not fled to the mountains, into caverns. There were about 15,000 Jews killed, and more than 2000 taken prisoners, of whom the greater part ran into Jordan and the sea Asphaltites: thus both land and water were covered with dead bodies. Afterwards they took possession of Abila, Julias, and Besmoth, and on the opposite side, the cities Sida, Jamnia, Amanuta, and all the country roundabout. Vespasian built castles, bulwarks, and forts about Jerusalem, so that he might surprise the streets leading to the city in all directions. Through one of his captains he took possession of the city Gerezim, and marched towards Jerusalem, and destroyed every thing around it, so that the citizens did not know what to do; for from without they were in danger of the

with their faction, they killed them. Of the higher class twelve thousand perished in this manner; nor did any one dare shed a tear or utter a groan openly, through fear of a similar fate.—*Tray.*

Romans, and from within the zealots harassed them, that they could not escape to join the Romans.

W. S. But did not these seditious factions perceive that their destruction was at hand, and that it was now high time to surrender the city to the Romans?

S. C. They were too much blindfolded to see their own interest ; for it appeared that God had justly determined to leave them to their well deserved fate, in order to punish them retributively.

W. S. Their horror and apprehensions of the just judgment of God were augmented when the Romans had besieged the city.

S. C. This is very true ; for this encompassing continued for a long time, so that it seemed as if the city was first to be punished by dreadful distressings before it would be destroyed. O ! how fortunate would they have been had the Romans at once fallen on them like devouring lions, carried about their children on spears, insulted the women, killed the men, and laid all in ruins, as they did in some cities, so that their sufferings would have at once been over. But they were not so fortunate : they were as one who is sick ; at one time convalescent, being braced up by tonics, but suffering pains, and subject to an immediate relapse, and thus lingering for a long time ; or like a guilty culprit richly deserving to be tortured and

tormented upon the rack, and then relieved for a short time till his sores and wounds have the appearance of getting well; and then is again and again placed upon the rack, and thus tormented till he suffer excruciatingly, and die a lingering death—a cruel death. This was the condition of the city, the inhabitants of which murdered all the prophets of God. Her judgment was of long durance—her sufferings were innumerable great. The fire of their afflictions was gradually increasing; for the city was first threatened when Petronius was governor, but under Fadus she was restored; under Cumanus she was again punished yet more severely; Felix ameliorated her condition somewhat; during the reign of Albinus her sufferings were greater; Agrippa afforded her some respite. But ultimately in the reign of Florus she was terribly punished: it appeared then that Cestius Gallus was to execute the sentence. However, after his defeat, her peace was measurably restored, still suffering internally on account of the different factious murderers. The false and groundless hopes of recovering only increased her misery. Afterwards it seemed as though Vespasian had arrived with the sting of death; but it was only as if a person had his hands and feet amputated, and lingering between life and death; for through the providence of God, he had to march back into Italy to quiet the

rebels there. For Nero, the emperor, had died in the fourteenth year of his reign, and Galba had usurped the throne, but Ottho drove him off again. However, Ottho was immediately conquered by Vitellius, who now unworthily governed the empire. Whereupon Vespasian was constrained to remedy these evils, and to restore peace to the country. He went to Rome in person, and expelled Vitellius, and was declared emperor of Rome by the common council, as one well worthy of the office. By these occurrences Jerusalem had a short respite from the rack, for as I told you, these were as racks to them.

W. S. Father, what do you say ?

S. C. O ! it appears as if God had tied all these rods into a scourge, to castigate this wicked city. For Simon, the son of Gorias, a great robber, who had retired to Masada, permitted none to rule but himself, and feigned to be opposed to the zealots, whom he repulsed as they were marching out of the city, conquering and driving them back again into the city of Jerusalem. He then marched into Idumea with an army 20,000 strong ; took possession of the whole country and of the city Hebron, in which there was a great supply of ammunition and provision. By this time he collected a powerful force, so that, besides the armed men, there followed him 40,000 robbers, who plundered all as they passed along. His heart was filled

with anger and revenge, so that the desolation of the country increased. They laid waste every thing, burning, destroying by trampling down the grain of the fields, and laid waste all. Whereupon the zealots made resistance, took Simon's wife prisoner, entered joyfully into the city, thinking to conquer him. But he came before the gates of the city raving like a mad boar, killed all that came in his way, made prisoners of all that came out of the city to fetch wood, or the necessaries of life, cut off their hands, and sent them back to the city, threatened to storm the walls, to murder both old and young that were in Jerusalem : they therefore returned him his wife. He compelled all the country people to flee into the city, besieged Jerusalem, killed those who were travelling from the towns to the city ; so that he was far more cruel than the Romans themselves. But the zealots* in the city were more barbarous than both ; for besides committing all manner of atrocity, robbing, plundering, ravaging, they dressed themselves most splendidly in women's clothes, and ran enraged through the city, stabbing all they met with. This miserable state of things caused much sighing ; and they then wished for a commander able to subdue these banditti : they therefore admitted Simon Gorias, and made

* Zealots, Sicari, or murderers, whom we mentioned in a preceding note.—*Trans.*

him chief commander. He immediately attacked the zealots, flattering himself to do just as he pleased ; but John, who was at the head of the zealots, made such powerful resistance that Simon had to retreat. Meanwhile Eleazar, the high-priest, went into the inner part of the temple, and got up on the pinnacle and fought against John from above, and Simon from below, so that John was between two enemies. These three factions caused great bloodshed in the city, for they fought daily among themselves, each striving for the ascendancy. They burnt storehouses full of provisions, thus depriving themselves of the necessaries of life, killed the citizens, murdered the priests, left the dead bodies lie in the streets unburied ; and if any one lamented, he was thrust through with a spear, and driven out of the city. The city was a den of robbers, and a sink of iniquitous abomination.

W. S. Unspeakable abomination ! But I hear nothing of the Romans who were about besieging the city.

S. C. Of these I will now tell you. When Vespasian, whom I mentioned before, had set all in order in Italy, and was emperor, he sent his son Titus to subdue the remaining part of the country, conquer Jerusalem, and completely to subdue the revolting Jews. Titus collected large forces from different countries, and marched within a short dis-

tance of Jerusalem, and after having viewed the city, accompanied by six hundred horsemen, yet not without great danger, he encompassed Jerusalem. This occasioned great fear among the zealots and other seditious Jews. The city was one dead calm when they beheld Mount Olivet lined with armed soldiers, walking about with long spears. The eagle, which was on all their standards, presaged their destruction. Some trembled and quaked for fear; others expected death as the only certain deliverance from their calamities; others again cried and wept, and lamented for their friends and relations, from whom they were separated by the Roman army; for it was at the time of the feast of the passover, when multitudes came up from all the surrounding country, and from distant parts, to keep the festival (the number is estimated not to be less than 1,200,000), who had come to sacrifice.* You may imagine, my son, how great the distress was, for from without the roads were crowded with horsemen and invincible heroes of the Romans, whose broad shields lined the country; from within nothing was heard but the cry of

* How suitable and how kind, then, was the prophetic admonition of our Lord, and how clearly he saw into futurity when he said, "Let not them that are in the countries enter into Jerusalem." Luke xxi. 22. Nevertheless, the city was then crowded with Jewish strangers, and foreigners from all parts, so that the whole nation may be considered as having been shut up in one prison, preparatory to the execution of the divine vengeance.—*Trans.*

murder, and the shrieks of the expiring. The miseries of tyranny were great: swords were sheathed in the blood of the dying; they gnashed their teeth like devouring wolves; a dread consternation prevailed throughout the whole city. Some of the aged now well recollect how they had insulted Jesus on the feast day, and had no compassion upon him in his sore distress. They well recollect the words he spoke when walking along under the burden of his cross, "If this is done to the green wood, what will become of the dry." Alas! could they now have concealed themselves under hills and mountains, they would have gladly done so. But, alas! this they could not do; they had to see their destruction approach, for Jerusalem was *compassed about with armies*, as Jesus had prophesied.

W. S. Father, you are speaking of important things. But did neither of the three factions in the city see that it would be better for them to surrender to the Romans?

S. C. This was among their last thoughts, for they fancied that they were defending the sanctuary of God, hence called zealots; and like their ancestor, Judas Maccabee, they were determined powerfully to resist the Romans, in reliance upon the justness of their cause, in defending the temple. They even attacked, repelled them powerfully, and slew some of the Romans, but were soon driven back

again into the city with a great loss.* In their contests with the Romans, they united; but as soon as those without were somewhat quieted, civil broils arose among them. Scenes of the most dreadful contention, of plundering and murdering ensued, and continued till they were assaulted from without; particularly were they quiet when the Romans applied their scaling ladders to the walls, so that every one heard them at work. Then they began to tremble; their valiant heroes lost their courage, and in great terror did they all see their destruction approach. Simon desisted from his cruelties. John proffered peaceable terms. The faction of Eleazar dispersed and arranged themselves under John and Simon, unitedly, to resist the Romans. They made several attacks upon the Romans. They often deceived them, pretending to be willing to make peace, and to throw open the gates. But when the Romans approached near the walls of the city, they threw stones and javelins at them, and thus succeeded to kill some of them. But by this course they made themselves the more reproachful, evincing by their actions whom they served. Although they appeared to be zealous for the Divine service, yet they had

* On the appearance of the Roman army, the factious Jews united, and rushing furiously out of the city, repulsed the tenth legion, which was with difficulty preserved.—*Trans.*

neither virtue nor godliness among them. They behaved villainously; acted shamefully in the sight of the heathens and their armies, against whom they fought with disdain!

W. S. O how great is that blindness which puffeth up so much, that one cannot discern his own sinfulness! Enough of this. I am anxious to hear the end.

S. C. On the 15th day of the siege, which was on the 7th of May, Titus took the first wall by storming it; and because the city was surrounded by three walls, there were yet two remaining. Meanwhile the soldiers, Jews as well as Romans, were under arms day and night, each fearing to be attacked by the other. However, after five days the Romans took possession of the other wall also; and, although the Jews took re-possession of it, yet, after a long engagement, it fell again into the hands of the Romans. Titus, touched by their calamities, in person, entreated the Jews to surrender, but they refused. Therefore (the houses, walls, and roofs being crowded with people) he drew up his army in military order, marched them regularly, in glittering armour, past them; dividing money publicly among them; and thus all were rejoicing in the presence of the Jews, who looked upon them with sorrowful hearts, especially the more so, because they had to suffer hunger in the city, so that they

greatly lamented their sad condition. However they were too proud to surrender to the Romans; still Titus hoped to compel them to make peace by besieging them for a long time. As their fears and distress were still augmenting, he sent Josephus to advise them to surrender :* although he delivered a long address, he could not succeed to persuade them to accept of what was reasonable. In the mean time Titus erected bulwarks, and made other preparations to storm the third wall, so that the Jews might repent of their obstinacy. But all was in vain, for God had determined utterly to destroy the city, which had already suffered indescribable misery.

W. S. I readily believe that very soon great want prevailed, when there was no supply any more for such a great multitude of people.

S. C. O, it cannot be described how deplorable a spectacle this was, for there was no more grain to be had. The rioters ran through the streets, broke open houses, ransacked and searched them to find provisions; and those citizens whose appearance was not so ghastly, they beat with unprecedented

* Josephus earnestly entreated John and his adherents to surrender; but the insolent rebel answered him with nothing but reproaches and imprecations, declaring his firm persuasion, that Jerusalem, as it was God's own city, would never be taken; thus literally fulfilling the declaration of Micah, that the Jews, in their extremity, notwithstanding their crimes, would presumptuously "Lean upon the Lord and say, 'Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us!'" Micah iii. 11.—*Trans.*

cruelty to make them tell whether they had any provisions left. Weakly and sickly persons they did not molest. Many of the sick gave all they had for a single bushel of grain. The poor died in great numbers—they starved to death! None could keep what he had laid up in store, for they ransacked the houses high and low, snatched half-chewed morsels out of their mouths, killed the women with whom they found bread, dashed the children against the walls that they might take their food from them. Some they tortured inhumanly to make them tell where they had their provisions. They pricked them in their secret parts with roasting-spits, and with pointed sticks,—they tormented them by applying them to their posteriors; and the like cruel barbarities did they inflict upon them. No kind of cruelty was too gross to be practised to extort from them provisions. These troubles they brought upon one another. All the reverence due to age and the sacred ties of parent and child were annihilated. Children snatched the half baked morsels, which their fathers were eating, out of their mouths; and mothers even snatched the food out of their own childrens' mouths. "As the siege advanced, the ravages of the famine increased and devoured the people by whole houses and families. The upper rooms were filled of the dead bodies of the aged. The children, also, and the young

men, wandered about the market-places like shadows, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them. At length the famine became so extreme, that they gladly devoured what the most sordid animals refused to touch; and a woman of distinguished rank, who had been stripped and plundered of all her goods and provisions by the soldiers, in hunger, rage, and despair, killed and roasted her babe at the breast, and had eaten one half before the horrid deed was discovered.”*—*Josephus, lib. 5, c. xii. § 3, 4.* The bodies of those who starved were so many that they could not all be interred, for some who were returning home from the funerals died on their return in the same hour. And the worst of all was, that none could escape; for whenever any one made the attempt, he was killed by Simon’s men.

W. S. O dreadful, miserable, lamentable condition!

S. C. A great many that went out of the city to get the necessaries of life were taken prisoners by the Romans, and crucified.

* Josephus deplores the cruel deed as a most flagrant violation of nature, which had never been perpetrated by Greek or barbarian, and such as he would not have related, if there had not been innumerable witnesses to it in his own age. It may be proper to remark, that this horrid circumstance was a further accomplishment of the prophecy of Moses, in Deut. xxviii. 53-57, and which had twice before been fulfilled: first, in Samaria, the capital of the idolatrous ten tribes, when besieged by Benhadad, king of Syria. 2 Kings vi. 29; and again in Jerusalem, when besieged by Nebuchadnezzar. See Lam. of Jer. ii. 20, and iv. 10. Horne’s *Intra.* vol. i. p. 620.—Note at the margin.—*Trans.*

They crucified so many that they could not raise crosses enough, nor had they room to erect them all, and therefore hanged them upon trees. And the seditious Jews compelled the relations of the executed to come and look upon them, to see this awful tragedy—where one beheld his father hanging in great agony ; another his brother, brother-in-law, or some other good friend, writhing, and with bloody hands and feet giving up the ghost. O how dear they had to pay for the sufferings they inflicted upon the friends and disciples of Christ ; when they had to look upon their Lord and Saviour in agony, while the rest mocked him, and exulted in their wicked undertaking. Now His blood had come upon their children, as they foolishly wished for, in the presence of Pilate.

W. S. I am astonished at the Divine justice. Nevertheless their miseries were sufficient to move the hardest heart. But did Titus feel no compassion towards them ?

S. C. He had great compassion for them ; but it was a richly merited and provoked punishment from the Romans, for they could not be pacified in any manner. Exasperated by their obstinacy and insolence, he now resolved to surround the city by a circumvallation,* which, with astonishing activity, was effected by the soldiers in three days

* This trench was thirty-nine furlongs in circuit, and strengthened with thirteen towers.—*Trans.*

Thus was fulfilled one of our Lord's predictions, for he had said, while addressing this city, "Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee roundabout, and keep thee in on every side." Luke xix. 43. As no supplies whatever could now enter the walls, the famine rapidly extended itself, so that the streets were daily more filled with dead bodies, and augmented the pestilence so much, that some of those who had buried them also dropped down dead : others went towards the grave before their last hour had come, and entreated them to be killed, but this favour was denied them ; for the zealots scoffed at them, and would sooner see them starve than to grant them their requests. When the dead had become so numerous that they could not all be buried, they were thrown over the walls to fill up the trenches, and terrify the Romans by their stench. From the commencement of the siege, that is from the 14th of April till the 1st of July, 11,588 dead bodies had been carried out through one gate, besides those who were thrown over the walls. Daily great numbers were thrown over. The consequence was, that the line of battle, both from within and from without, had to march over the heaps of dead bodies, and trample them down, which was a miserable spectacle to behold.

W. S. O ! how these surpass all other calamities that ever befell Jerusalem.

S. C. Are you speaking of Jerusalem? Yes, that ever befell all the world besides; for the greatest sins that ever were committed were perpetrated here, in this city. But to come to a close, you must bear in mind that Titus had powerful bulwarks erected to storm the third wall. After he had broken down the outer walls, of which these heaps of stone testify, he cut down the finest trees, such as olive, fig, and apple-trees. For, my son, the circumjacent country was like a paradise, abounding with all kinds of fruit-trees; numerous were the pleasure-gardens, in which the nobility and other rich citizens amused themselves; all these are now destroyed. How transitory are all earthly things! Little did King Agrippa think that the large quantities of precious wood which he had prepared to enlarge the temple would serve the mutinous and seditious John for a bulwark. Those who planted these pleasure-gardens never thought that they were preparing materials for Titus to storm the city with. He laid waste all around the city by destroying and cutting down all the trees: he advanced, the Jews resisted him manfully, threw stones and javelins, any thing they could lay hold of. But the Romans closed their shields against all this, undermined the walls of fort Antonia, and demolished them with the battering ram; but in the inside they found another wall, and as that surprised them, Titus

encouraged his men to be valiant, which excited Sabinus, so that he fought against the Jews for life and death, who, after having parried off the stones and other weapons with his shield, fell upon his knees and covered himself with his shield from the attacks of the Jews till he died. But two days afterwards twenty soldiers scaled the walls, stabbed the guard, took possession of fort Antonia, and drove the Jews into the temple by force, where a dreadful battle ensued ; the arrows flew, trumpets were heard amidst the cry and shrieks of the multitude. But the Romans had to be satisfied with fort Antonia.

W. S. O ! sorrowful history !

S. C. After Julianus had made several ineffectual attacks upon the Jews, and himself being slain, Titus again sent Josephus to proffer terms of peace, and afterwards also by some fugitive priests. All this they disregarded, and scoffed Titus ; whereupon Titus again made the attempt to storm the temple by night. A contest ensued, in which many were killed, especially of the Jews, who, on account of the darkness of the night, in mistake, killed their own people. The Jews, after several engagements, burnt the wing-work of the temple, and thus the beginning of the destruction of the temple was by fire. Afterwards they filled certain parts of the temple with dry wood, sulphur, pitch, and other combustible matter, and retreated in a sham,

upon which the Romans entered it. The Jews then put fire to it, and they were surrounded by fire; and in the midst of the dread consternation some ran into the hands of the enemy, others threw themselves down from above, others again committed suicide. The miseries of the dying Romans were dreadful, who were killed by this stratagem, among whom were some noted persons, namely, Longus, Cornelius, Antonius, and Lucius. Such miseries befell the Romans, but worse ones the Jews, because the famine still increased; for not only the common people, but also the rioters, for want of food, were at length compelled to eat their belts, their sandals, the skins of their shields, dried grass, which was sold for four pence per half ounce, and even the ordure of oxen. Even the natural affections were disregarded,—women did eat their own children!

W. S. O ! unheard-of barbarity !

S. C. I can assure you, my son, that I cannot relate this without shedding tears most profusely. Yes, my son, in the depth of this horrible extremity, (as I hinted to you before,) a Jewess, named Maria, of noble family, urged by the intolerable cravings, slew her infant child, and prepared him for a meal; and had actually eaten one half of him, when the soldiers were drawn by the smell of food, who threatened her with instant death if she refused to discover it. Being in-

timidated, she showed them the remains of her son, which petrified them with horror. This affecting occurrence filled the city with lamentation ; nothing was heard but weeping, lamenting, and wailing, every one wishing to die ; which, however, was not their happy lot till they had suffered intolerably : because they had distressed Mary, the mother of Jesus, by killing her child, they had now to suffer themselves. Alas ! they ought to have had more compassion upon her, and taken it to heart when they saw Jesus, God's only-beloved Son, nailed to the cross, wounded, and shamefully tormented. And although this was done for their salvation, yet did they not regard it, and because they *did* not regard the days of their gracious visitation. Those days came upon them in which they said, as Christ told them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children ; for, behold, the days are coming in which they shall say, *Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck.*" Luke xxiii. 29. I am sick and tired of relating any more about the calamities of this city, which are almost innumerable ; for I would rather retire to weep, than to talk with you now.

W. S. Father, I readily believe you ; however, I wish to hear the end of this obstinate people, and the destruction of this splendid

city ; for the ancient remains excite my curiosity. Be pleased to let me hear a brief history. I will not insist upon particulars.

S. C. When Titus found that the seditious were not to be otherwise subdued, though desirous to spare the temple and the people, he commanded, contrary to his feelings, to set fire to the outer gates of the temple, which occasioned great fear among those that were in it ; for they saw themselves surrounded by the flames. Titus, determining to save the splendid buildings of the inner temple, commanded the soldiers to extinguish the fire, and made ready to drive the Jews out of the temple by force. This is what the emperor had determined to do, but the Almighty had determined otherwise. Amidst all his exertions to prevent the destruction of the temple, a Roman soldier, urged, as he declared, by a divine impulse, regardless of the command of Titus, climbed on the shoulders of another, and threw a flaming brand into the golden window of the temple, which instantly set the building on fire. This caused a great cry ; those within saw death staring them in the face, because the Romans enveloped all in blood and fire, and rushed in upon them with drawn swords, which raised a most dreadful cry of murder ! When the emperor saw the fire, he sent messengers to interfere : he did all he could to have them desist, but he found it impossible to restrain the impetuosity and

cruelty of the soldiers. They made dreadful havoc. The blood ran in torrents down the stairway, dead bodies were thrust down ; the yell and whoop of the soldiers, with the shrieks and cries of the dying, made the mountains send back the horrid echo, while the ascending flames consumed all. When the emperor, having attempted in vain to prevail on the soldiers to extinguish the fire, desisted entreating them, they, actuated by rancour, soon spread the flames wider and wider. Whole sections of walls were seen falling, and covering the altar which was stained with the blood of the slain. The weeping Jews, standing at a distance, lamented the disaster, and the destruction of their sanctuary. The Romans then began to plunder, and murder all they met with, old and young, men, women, and children, guilty and innocent—all had to suffer death ! The seditious, who were surrounded by fire and arms, also raised a great cry, which, commingled with the crashings of the burning temple, excited the sympathy of those in the city. Some thrust themselves into the flames ; others, with the priests, fought against the Romans with roasting spits, some of whom fled into the outward building, to secure themselves behind the wall, of whom about six thousand were buried by the wall which fell. The temple began to fall; the golden roof broke

down, one side wall fell after another, the fire increased more and more, the tumult was ceasing, the heaps of ruins increased, the burning beams, half covered with ashes, fell crashing, half burnt. Thus the boast of Israel was laid into ashes ; and the temple was burnt on the 10th of August. On the same day Nebuchadnezzar burnt the temple in days past : between the two catastrophes, six hundred and eighty-eight years elapsed ; from the building of the first temple, by Solomon, eleven hundred and thirty years, and from the rebuilding by Zerubbabel, six hundred and sixteen years. O ! what calamities, what remarkable history have I related. Astonishing ! The justice of God was visible in all these things.*

W. S. It certainly was a just judgment, an unavoidable one, for it appears that they were without any cause, determined to persist in their mad career till they were utterly destroyed.

S. C. Alas ! this is too true. For there were false prophets among them, deceiving

* Thus terminated the glory and existence of one of the most splendid edifices that ever existed. From its stupendous size, its massiveness and solidity, according to all human calculation, it might have resisted the most violent operations of human force, and have stood, like the Egyptian pyramids, the shocks of successive ages, until the angel sound the trump, "time shall be no more." But God had determined otherwise. Our Lord and Master told the Jews, "The day will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Luke xxi. 6.—*Trans.*

them with fair, but false promises, of their deliverance; hence they would not accept the overtures of peace from the Romans.

W. S. What obstinacy! But I desire to hear the end—hear of the destruction of the city.

S. C. After the temple was burnt, the remaining Jews of one party fled; and when they would not surrender themselves to the mercy of the emperor, the scene of carnage and burning commenced again. The Romans set on fire the castle Akra, the register office, the council chamber, and the palace of queen Helena, and then spread itself throughout the city,—whole streets were laid waste. All their valuable furniture was burnt, their deeds, bonds, and coffers were consumed, their whole dependence was reduced to ashes. Many were burnt, some suffocated by the smoke, others stabbed,—the blood flowed so copiously that the hot ashes were covered with blood. The cry of murder that was then raised exceeds description. The seditious Jews still had possession of the upper city, which was built upon the mountain. Some were ready to surrender; but when Simon Gorias heard of it, he punished them cruelly; yet finally the Romans took the whole city, and marched in large bodies through the streets, killing and murdering all they met with. Not one was spared—they killed all without respect of person, till at

length the bodies of the dead choked up all the alleys and narrow passages, while their blood literally flowed down the channels of the city in streams, and in some places extinguished the fire. This continued till the Romans were tired of killing and murdering, and till the remainder of the multitude were secured in bonds and imprisoned. Alas! the houses, which before glittered, being ornamented with gold and silver. All their valuable furniture were now filled with putrid carcasses of those who did not regard the holy martyrs as deserving a decent burial—nothing but the ashes of the city covered them. Those who refused the disciples of Christ meat and drink, now perished by hunger. Those who thrust James the Lesser from the pinnacle of the temple, had now to jump in great numbers into the dreadful fire. Those who accused Paul before the Romans, and were the cause of the death of Christ, had now to fall victims to the sword of the Romans, and perish most miserably! And, lastly, the city, which was a den of murderers, who killed the holy prophets and apostles of God, became a den of murderers of her own citizens.

W. S. Father, this is worthy of attention; you did not relate these things in vain before. But, as the city was thus destroyed and burnt, I may readily conclude, that, in such a wealthy city as this, the soldiers would richly

supply themselves with plunder, which they no doubt found in abundance, and that they did not destroy all, without first supplying themselves?

S. C. They were eagerly in search for all the treasures. They tortured many of the wretched inhabitants, by cutting their bodies open to take from them the gold which they had swallowed. They ransacked high and low every private place; nay, even the fetid tombs did not escape their search. They searched privies, in which the Jews had secreted themselves. Their booty was very great, for the precious articles alone which they pillaged from the temple were invaluable; besides what they got in the houses which they took possession of. While thus engaged in searching, they found many of the robbers, among others John of Gischala, who had nearly perished by hunger and the stench of the dead carcasses. He was taken by the Romans; but Simon Gorias had concealed himself in a cavern, thinking to escape after the destruction of the city, and thus escape so richly merited a punishment. But the wisdom of God was too wise for him, for he was soon out of provisions, and being now in sore distress, he determined upon frightening the Romans by dressing himself in a white tunic. In this habiliment he came forth. At first some were frightened, but when he approached them, he was immediately re-

cognised, taken, and delivered to the emperor; together with his adherents, and confined till the day of triumph

W. S. I well perceive, that wickedness always meets with its own disaster. There is certainly neither wisdom nor counsel that can prevail against the Lord. But be pleased to tell me what happened before the emperor evacuated.

S. C. He commanded that all which was remaining should be destroyed, and to raze the walls of the city, the gates, doors, palaces, and other edifices. The walls of the temple were razed to the ground. They were busily employed with crow-bars and sledges in breaking down the stones. The noise thus occasioned, and the cries of the soldiers while engaged, "Come here, come here!" &c., was everywhere heard. The echo resounded and rebounded from hill to hill. Some were amazed at the firmness of the building, requiring much labour to break down the walls, but they were not the least dismayed. They persevered till all was one common heap of ruins, as you now see it, overgrown by thistles and thorns, and which astonishes you so much. Not one stone was left upon another of the temple, as Jesus had prophesied, when we were with him on Mount Olivet. The three lofty towers, Mariamne, Phasael, and Hippocas, only remained, which Titus commanded should remain as evidences

of this great city, and as trophies of his victory. These towers are the dwelling-places of crows, owls, and bats, which you see flying about there. Here, then, my son, you see the destroyed city, which stood from the time it was first built by Melchisedeck, rising of two thousand years; and from the destruction thereof till now, thirty-seven years have elapsed; for I was eighty-three years old when it happened, and am now one hundred and twenty years of age. I lived to see the glory and the destruction of the city, and the causes of her destruction. I heard the predictions of her destruction uttered, and saw the fulfilment of those predictions; which I have at last related to you, as well as what I heard from my ancestors, and what I read in the sacred Scriptures, and I have concealed nothing, so that you may not be deficient in the knowledge of this history. And, now, I suppose, I have answered your questions satisfactorily, especially those which you put in consequence of the surprise, when your attention was arrested as you passed through the city, and saw the heaps of ruins, burnt walls, streets overgrown with grass, ancient remains, broken pillars and broken gates, and swarming towers. Be now satisfied with what I have related, for I have given you a copious account of all.

W. S. Father, I am under multiplied obligations to you, for the instruction received

from you ; for I need not now be astonished at the dilapidated buildings—why these hills are overgrown with thistles and thorns, and all those other things. But I desire a tenacious memory to retain all I heard, which you related to me so circumstantially. However, the substance thereof I shall never forget. Although you have fully answered my first questions, and gratified my curiosity, still I feel myself excited further to inquire concerning the history of the Jews, and what further happened from that time till now, which appears, from your account, to be about thirty-seven years.

S. C. Am I not allowed to rest at all ? Are you still for troubling an old man like I am with new questions ? Do you suppose I am made of iron or steel,—I, who have spent so great a part of the day, and whose heart is pierced with inward sorrows ? Shall I again be troubled by relating distressing histories ? Certainly, my son, although you may wish to have a knowledge of these things, still you ought to have mercy on my old age.

W. S. I have certainly so much commiseration for you, that it appears to me as if your tears were my own, and your sighing often pierces my heart. However, I feel as if I could not leave you before I also know the rest. Who knows what beneficial results may ensue—what instructions I may deduce from the narration ?

S. C. Therefore, as you wish to be instructed, I will then commence again. Son, Titus took the remaining of them with him as prisoners—there were about ninety-seven thousand. O! how sorrowful every one then was! Their sorrow you may readily imagine. One had lost his father; another his mother; a third his wife; a fourth his children; another his brothers. Their country was laid waste and in ruins, their city destroyed, and they themselves bound between devouring lions, whom they had enraged by their obduracy. They sighed and looked for immediate death, or everlasting slavery as it happened to them; for some were thrown before wild beasts in theatres, which tore them to pieces; others were compelled to fight against each other, till they destroyed one another; others were compelled to run through the fire, till the flames consumed them. Thus many were killed. The handsomest of the youths were reserved to grace Titus's triumphant entry into Rome. Some, together with their wives and families, were publicly sold like cattle, but at a very low price. Thirty of them were sold at one time for a penny.* This was a righteous judgment, because they had sold Jesus for thirty

* Here were fulfilled the words of Moses, who had predicted this more than fifteen hundred years beforehand, "*And ye shall be sold for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.*" Deut. xxviii. 68.—Trans.

pieces of silver, although he was worth more than all the wealth of the world. Thus their cup was filled to overflowing. The Jews were now hated, persecuted, and destroyed, both here and in the cities; for they were reproached by every nation. Some of the Roman officers who remained, subdued all Judea, and took possession of all their fortified places, of which Machurentha, where John was beheaded, was the first. It appears that this man's blood still cried for vengeance. Not less than three thousand of the fugitive Jews were slain in the woods of Jardes, whither they had fled. At the siege of Massada, Eleazar, the commander, instigated the garrison to burn their stores, and to destroy first the women and children, and then themselves. Dreadful as it is to relate, this horrid design was executed. They were in number nine hundred and sixty. Ten were chosen to perform this bloody work. The rest sat on the ground, and, embracing their wives and children, stretched out their necks to the sword. One was afterwards appointed to destroy the remaining *nine*, and then to kill himself. The survivor, when he had looked around to see that all were slain, set fire to the place, and plunged his sword into his own bosom. Nevertheless, two women and five children concealed themselves, and saw the whole transaction. When the Romans advanced to the attack in the morning, one of

the women gave them an account of the whole transaction. The whole country was then taken, and made tributary to the Romans. Simon Gorias, John, and other such fellows were led in triumph into Rome, and were derided by all. Simon was bound, and dragged through the market-place, sorely beaten, and afterwards executed, as the reward of his wickedness; and with him both the glory and power of Judea was laid low.

W. S. But had they no hopes that the city and the temple would be rebuilt, and raised to their former glory, as was the case when they returned from Babylonian captivity?

S. C. They expected, I know not what kind of a Messiah, who should re-establish to their kingdom; but in this they were deceived; for there were still some who undertook to redeem them from the yoke of the Gentiles, but they were all deceived, as I told you before. The prophecy of Daniel remains too true; for it was predicted by him, that this destruction should last till the end of the world, and that Jesus is the true and only Messiah, whom they rejected. He also plainly told them that their house should be left desolate; for God will not establish such a kingdom: his kingdom is a heavenly one, which will endure through all eternity, into which all the believers shall once enter. This is our hope, our comfort, and belief, and this is all we wish for in this world. The Jews

will find themselves deceived at last, because they vainly hope for a kingdom in this world. True, they will be scattered in the world till the end of time, but never be restored to their kingdom again.* Here the people of God have much trouble, sufferings, and persecution ; even as Christ had to endure much affliction, so should also his followers suffer.

W. S. What do you say ? had they always to suffer persecution ? Did not persecution cease when the Jews had lost their power ? Were there other tyrants than the Jews ? I thought they alone were the enemies of God, and on that account Jerusalem was destroyed in such a dreadful manner.

S. C. Have you already forgotten that I told you that we were slaughtered like sheep during the reign of some of the Roman emperors, and that many of the apostles were most cruelly treated by the heathens ? It is true, the Jews began first to persecute us ; and because light had appeared to them, their sins were more heinous than those of the Gentiles. However, the heathens also were enraged, and devoured us like wolves. O !

* From several Scripture declarations, it is evident that the Jews shall be called to participate the blessings of the gospel. Rom. xi. 2. Cor. iii. 16. Hos. i. And some are of opinion that they shall return to their own land. Hos. iii. Isaiah lxv. Ezek. xxxvi. The prediction is, *till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, and this indicates that Jerusalem shall not be trodden down for ever. Some suppose the time to be about the year 1866, others 2016. See Dr. H. Jackson's Works, vol. i. p. 153 ; and Bicheno's Restoration of the Jews.—*Trans.*

when I remember how many martyrs there were in the reign of the cruel emperor Nero, who was the first persecutor among the heathens, and how many suffered under Domitian,* and again under Trajan, my heart is pierced with sorrows. It cannot be uttered how much Nero, the wicked emperor, raged against the Christian church. Among other diabolical acts, he set the city of Rome on fire, and blamed the Christians with the act ; and while the city was in flames, he went up on the tower of Mecænas, played upon his harp, sung the song of the burning of Troy, and declared, “ That he wished the ruin of all things before his death.” The Christians he took he covered with the skins of wild beasts: they were torn to pieces by devouring dogs, or fastened to crosses, and wrapped up in combustible garments, that when daylight failed, they might, like torches, serve to dispel the darkness of night. The emperor himself was more cruel than a lion, who had even his own mother cut open, and his tutor, Seneca, who instructed him, and who was a distinguished and wise man, he commanded to be killed, together with many other noble men in his empire. Is it a wonder that he spilled so much Christian blood ? Is it at all astonishing that he, when sitting on the judgment-seat enraged, condemned the holy apos-

* In the year 95, under Domitian, 40,000 were supposed to have suffered martyrdom.—*Trans.*

tles? Who ordered Paul to be led forth, who lifting his eyes heavenward, evidencing a joyful hope of immortality, till he, on the road to Ostium, kneeling, gave up the ghost, being beheaded. He also most cruelly persecuted the other apostles, deacons, and bishops. You may readily imagine if he did not spare his own house, that he would barbarously treat those whom he considered enemies.

W. S. You are speaking of a monster, destitute of every spark of humanity!

S. C. Domitian, who in his youth had acquired a cruel disposition by killing flies barbarously, could not, when he was advanced in years, live in peace, till he had seen the blood of his own citizens shed, and still more the blood of the Christians. However, in this he was not only actuated by cruelty, but by pride, for he wished to be called, "*Lord and God!*" and he felt sorry that any other one should bear that name besides himself. And because the Christians refused him that honour, for this name belongs to none but Christ Jesus alone, he was very much enraged, and determined to exterminate them. He also equally cruelly punished those of the tribe of David, so that he might prevent the coming of the true Messiah, whom the Jews expected to descend from that tribe. The various kinds of punishment were cruel,—imprisonment, racking, searing, broiling, burning, scourging,

hanging, and worrying. Sentences were executed according to the edicts. Some were burnt, others hanged, some crucified, some flayed alive, fried, or roasted in an oven* made of copper, as was done with Antipas of Bergamo; others were put into a caldron of boiling oil, as was the case with the last of the apostles, John. Some were stoned to death by the idolatrous priests, as was Timotheus in the temple of Diana. Others again were compelled to fight with wild beasts, as did Atillius Glabrio at Rome. It was a great mercy for them to be banished, and driven from the country, which was the lot of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch; who afterwards returned, and was again pursued, and it is to be feared he will be yet crowned with the crown of a martyr.† He is a zealous follower of the apostles, whose faith, sufferings, bonds, and imprisonment, walk and conversation, are known to him. They principally seek to destroy the lives of the pious; for these tyrants are chagrined to see the church flourish in time of peace. There were others who were banished in the reign of Domitian. The noblewoman, Flavia Domicilla, although she was his niece, his sister's daughter, was, together with others, banished into the Isle

* In the form or shape of an ox.

† He was devoured by two hungry lions, in the twelfth year of the reign of the emperor Trajan. Compare Abr. Mell. tom. i. fol. 25. Col. 1, 2, 3, 4, and fol. 26. Col. 1. with John Gysii His. Mart. fol. 15, &c. printed 1619.—Trans.

of Ponto, for confessing that she was a follower of Christ. The apostle John, after being boiled in a caldron of oil, was banished to the Isle of Patmos. Others were condemned to work in the mines, and were miserable slaves. All this caused great lamentation among us, men, women, and children, because many of us lost our dear fathers. With great anxiety of heart, they expected that their punishment would be ameliorated. Alas ! those who could earn their bread in quietude and peace were counted fortunate. The Jews were miserably degraded and deprived of all,—one basket was allowed them only to go about begging, and a bundle of hay to sleep on ; but this was a great mercy and privilege in comparison with what the Christians had to endure ; for they expected daily to be taken and delivered into the hands of the merciless executioners. Some fled into the wilderness, into caves of the earth, where they had to suffer the greatest privations imaginable : they went about in sheep and goat skins, as vagrants and outcasts of the earth. O ! my son, were I to relate all what I have seen during the reign of that emperor, time and ability would both fail me.

W. S. Were these tyrants punished ?

S. C. Not a little. Nero was hated and despised by every one on account of his wickedness, before he was thirty two years of age, and in the fourteenth of his reign. When he

was aware of that, he made an attempt upon his own life : he fled from the city, and committed suicide. Domitian was stabbed, in the 12th year of his reign, in his own hall, while in the act of reading a letter which was handed him by one of the traitors. Afterwards his memory was blotted from all the records, and his likeness destroyed ; for every one was for avenging himself on account of his cruelty !

W. S. Did the persecution then cease with them ?

S. C. For a very short period—only during the reign of Nerva. He was a mild and kind prince. He released and remanded home the unfortunate Christians. This occasioned great joy in all the Christian churches ; for now they again received their exiled shepherds and dear fathers. John returned from the Isle of Patmos to Ephesus, where he was gladly received. Ignatius returned to Antioch ; and all the other exiles returned with joy to their people, praising God for his mercy. But this joy was of short continuance, for before Nerva had reigned one year and six months,* Trajan, who still reigns, succeeded him, and began the third persecution against the Christians. He killed and murdered as many as those before him did. We heard daily that this one was made pri-

* Nerva only had reigned *thirteen months*.—*Trans.*

somer; that another one banished; another cruelly tormented, tortured, or starved to death. Some were imprisoned; others beheaded, burnt, or torn to pieces by wild beasts, or had to suffer inhuman torments. This cruelty has been carried on for eight years already, and, it is to be feared, will not soon end.* Yet the Lord knows: for our part we are prepared to meet all, whatever may happen us.

W. S. Was this emperor such a great tyrant?

S. C. No, not at all. He was a good emperor in the management of his political affairs.

W. S. You excite my astonishment anew! I cannot comprehend this!

S. C. O! my son, you ought to bear in mind, that all the wisdom of the world cannot comprehend the wisdom of God. This emperor thought that we were very wicked, because we would not worship their *gods*. You recollect what Noah told you of the beginning of idolatry in his time; and you also heard from my narration that several noted men, such as Jupiter, Venus, Pallas, Vesta, Saturn, Pluto, and a host of others, were deified as *gods* and *goddesses*. These, by length

* Trajan died, A. D. 117, and was succeeded by Adrian. In the first years of his reign, the persecution went on; but, upon the whole, less distressing than during the reign of Nero and Domitian. See Brach's Hist. *Martyrs*, in German.—Trans.

of time and fabulous histories, were indelibly impressed upon their minds, that they were honoured as gods by erecting temples and offering sacrifice to them. And they firmly believed that those gods governed the world, and conferred all the blessings they enjoyed, which, however, are the gifts of the one only God, creator of heaven and earth; and because we ascribed all this to the only God, and rejected their idols, they esteemed us as wicked. Whenever any misfortune happened on earth, such as pestilence, fire, war, earthquakes, dry and unfruitful seasons, or any other calamities, we were blamed for all these, "Because," said they, "the gods do not receive their just sacrifice, and are therefore angry, and send such calamities among us." By such and like surmises, we were hated of all men, rejected and persecuted, and even of wise and prudent rulers, among whom we may reckon this emperor.

W. S. But did your sedentary life, your virtuous deportment, not convince them that you were not wicked; but, on the contrary, pious and honest?

S. C. Alas! they laid more than this to our charge! They deprived us of our good name, of our honour, as much as possible. They opposed us in our meetings and assemblies, for we often met at night. They spake all manner of evil against us, accusing us of doing unlawful things; especially did

their idolatrous priests exaggerate before their rulers. However, some of the more prudent examined impartially into the matter, and found it otherwise, which made a favourable impression upon the people; for not long ago, it so happened, that in Bythinia, in Asia, the chief burgess, Plinius, paid strict attention to our conduct and behaviour, and wrote a letter to the emperor, in which he said, "That he was astonished at the great number of Christians, and their good moral conduct; for," said he, "they do nothing evil, but rise very early in the morning and meet together to praise God, by singing and praying, and other commendable exercises; and that it was his decided opinion, better not to kill the Christians, but to tolerate them; and the more so, because he was of opinion that it was the only way to lessen their number, and that they ought not to be destroyed by violence." This letter had its desired effect upon the emperor: he issued an edict that none should apprehend any of the Christians, but only to kill those that were in captivity, or should otherwise fall into their hands. But the persecution did not altogether end, it only ameliorated their sentence when pronounced by righteous judges. The unjust and tyrannical were as cruel as ever in executing sentence, and often said hypocritically, "We do not kill you, it is the edict of the emperor that does;" and

therefore many are in dread and sorrow, that tyranny is still exercised under the garb of pretended justice.

W. S. Alas ! that is lamentable !

S. C. I would weep for them day and night, if there were not as much cause of joy as there is for grief.

W. S. What joy can there arise from hanging, burning, strangling, beheading, and the like cruel inflictions ; their goods confiscated, and they banished ; unless a person can rejoice to see widows and orphans weep, and to hear them cry !

S. C. O ! we Christians shed prophetic tears !

W. S. I shall again listen with astonishment to your explanation, for otherwise I cannot comprehend the meaning of your words.

S. C. O ! son, I have lived to see several persecutions, and a time when we were free from persecution ; but what does it avail ? How much we have been humbled, how devoted we have become, and become dead to the things of this world through these persecutions ! We maintained ourselves by mechanical pursuits, we were satisfied with the common necessaries ; our clothing, meat, and drink were very common, our thatched cottages showed that we were but pilgrims upon earth. We were not for laying up treasures upon earth : what we had left was distributed

among the poor, we kept a common table for all ; with pleasure and a joyful heart we now and then met secretly—no forest was too dark, no road too tedious, no place too far off. We rejoiced to see each other—garrets, barns, and caves were welcomed by us; the cobwebs therein gave us more pleasure than all the gold in Solomon's temple. O ! the pious conversation, what ardent devotions in the solitary ! There the bishops displayed great wisdom in comforting their flocks in their sore distress, and thus some were effected to renounce the world, and join themselves, by baptism, to the believers. O ! the tears that were shed ! what anxiety was evinced ! what heavenly joy prevailed, and filled the hearts of the assembly ! Whole nights were spent in prayer and divine exercises. Every one was fervid in heavenly zeal ; love, like a cord, united our hearts ; there was no molestation. The soul was free from all earthly cares, its affections directed heavenward, as if borne up on wings. I knew many who would have gladly met the executioner, and suffered execution, to be speedily translated from this wicked world, to enjoy the company of their beloved bridegroom Christ Jesus. Neither flames of fire, nor brandished swords, nor wild beasts could deter them from their holy resolutions ; yea, what do I say, deter them ! All these torments only strengthened and encouraged them ; urging them on in their

pious course. They regarded them as purging medicines against all the evils of sin : the Christian church increased daily, and flourished so much, that its increase gave rise to the proverb, "*The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.*"

W. S. You speak of a mysterious and unheard-of fervency. But did this fervency not continue in time of peace ?

S. C. The persecutions did not so readily abate ; the mandates were not so speedily and universally published, that every one was set at liberty. Thus this great fire began to diminish : the security of life gave occasion for many speculations. One betook himself to mercantile business, one provided himself with a palace, a third purchased lands, which he planted with all kinds of trees ; others were not satisfied with one farm, but added farm to farm, house to house. Some pursued other enjoyments, so that all were eager in their own pursuit. They began to consider what was necessary for the ensuing year, how much rent or income would be requisite for this life ; and then their cares were about their children, so that they also might have a sufficient income. In short, their minds were occupied and polluted by the things of this world : their attendance at meetings was mere formality ; brotherly love grew cold ; those who did before distribute their goods among the distressed brethren

now shut their hearts against them. The love of money was greater than the love of souls : riches and gain were esteemed godly, and poverty a shame. They were more anxious to accumulate wealth than to become virtuous, and yet nothing was so detrimental as riches, for they increase the love for this world ; they began to be respected and honoured by the noble, associating with them ; they were honoured with offices among them, imitated their manners, changed their dress, built splendid houses, fared sumptuously daily, began to hate each other, eager in pursuit of transitory things, which they before little regarded. Before they would suffer their possessions and goods to be taken without resisting. But, alas ! now they risked their lives for them, or at least made great exertions to save them ; humility and patience, the nurses of virtue, were little regarded. O ! my son, you may readily imagine how injurious this was to our meetings ! how drowsy many were, having their minds distracted ! Love abated among us, and this it was that the aforementioned Plinius of Bythinia well observed, and he therefore advised Trajan, the emperor, not to persecute us, but allow us our liberty, and we would ourselves soon degenerate, and our number be naturally diminished. How well considered was this advice, urged by the instigation of the enemy of all good, who thus attempted to

ensnare our souls, well knowing that this world is detrimental to the Christian cause.

W. S. But the bishop and elders ought to preach manfully against the increasing evil—root up this evil as much as possible. They ought to reprove, threaten, and exhort, so that the people would continue sound in the faith, and not be contaminated by the infections of the world.

S. C. Son, reproof and exhortation were not wanting; they preached and entreated as earnestly as they did during the persecution. It might be said, their sermons were more studied, and their places of meeting were more finished, than they were during the times of sore distress. But what did that benefit? The love of this world cannot be banished from the hearts of men in this way; for even the bishops, where all things prospered, were entangled in the same snare. Alas! how many did I know, whose zeal abated: and the hands that wrote instructive letters were now engaged in accounts. Those who were wont to go to meeting by day or by night, through rains, storms, and winds, to join in devout exercise with the believers, were now actively employed in mercantile houses. The tongues that used to praise the Lord, were now engaged in managing a bargain, or speaking of the news of the day: their minds were wholly absorbed by the things which were esteemed among

the noble and great of the earth. The poor were despised, the great and renowned commanded their attention and respect; the poor were now dejected and troubled in mind, for they were not respected as much as they had been. This occasioned discontentment on both sides. Their love abated, they had less intercourse with one another; and had not God occasionally chastised the church, the Lord knows what pride might have arisen among those carnally-minded bishops! what strange things they would yet begin; nay, what a general apostacy would have happened. But I trust that God, who is a merciful Father, will take care of his own, so that they may be saved at last.

W. S. Father, I would not suppose that all the bishops and elders were polluted with this evil in the times of their liberty, as you have been telling me.

S. C. By no means, my son; that would have been a lamentable state of things! I only spoke of the general state of things; for I am well aware of the unshaken piety of some faithful shepherds, such as Ananias of Alexandria, who died fourteen years ago, and his successor, Abilius, who showed himself a man in perilous times: he died eight years ago; and his successor, Cerdon, did not less successfully rule the church, with virtue and in wisdom. And also Ignatius, of Antioch, whom none did excel. What a pious man he

was ! how affectionately he exhorted his people to be steadfast amid all their persecutions ; waiting and looking for nothing less than to be taken prisoner himself, by order of the cruel emperor, which he would have esteemed a great pleasure. Who is able fully to relate all the virtues of the holy Polycarpus,* the successor of his teacher, the holy apostle, John, who ruled the church at Smyrna. The church at Hierapolis is also blessed with two burning and shining lights, namely, Papias, and Quadratus,† who teach them as they were instructed to do by the apostles, and what the Holy Ghost yet teaches them, and feed them richly with the bread of life. And what shall I say of Clemens Romanus, the disciple of Paul ; and of others who are zealous, and walk in the footsteps of their predecessors ? O ! how devout, and filled with the love of God, did these men rule the church : their gray hairs were honoured,—how instructive their preaching was ; how earnestly, and with what seriousness did they read the writings of the apostles, as well as the letters of the holy martyrs, which they had written in bonds and in prison. O ! the tears that were shed, the prayers uttered ! and what

* Was killed by the sword and fire, in the eighty-seventh year of his age, and twenty-seventh of his ministry, A. D. 168. See Iren. lib. 3, and T. J. V. Bracht's Hist. Martyrs, fol. 49-51. Ger. Ed.—*Trans.*

† Quadratus made a learned apology in favour of the Christians before the emperor Adrian.—*Trans.*

songs of praise ! what a preparation was made for death ; for they did not know whether they would be crucified, or hanged, or die a natural death in bed. O ! the eldest apostle John,* whom I knew in my younger days, when he was but a youth. What agreeable words flowed from his lips in his old age, who preached to, and exhorted his children to love one another, which is, indeed, the bond of perfection ; and we had evidence of this among ourselves. O ! I wish that I could feed my flock here, in this ruined city, as well as he did his at Ephesus. They have now wept and sorrowed for him for seven years, and when mine will be sorrowing for me, I know not. However, I trust that the chief Shepherd will supply my place with some one else. I would recommend Justus ; he is zealous and devout man : he has been my fellow helper. And it is time that I take charge of my flock again, of which I had the superintendence for forty years, since the death of the holy apostle James the Lesser. I have now spent four days with you, and been at your service—answered all your questions which you proposed : the night is drawing nigh, and we will have to retire.

W. S. I have no reason to detain you any longer, father, although I should not have

* John was the only apostle who escaped a violent death, and lived the longest of any of them, being nearly one hundred years of age at the time of his death.

been displeased to hear something concerning the apostles' writings, which you say were read in your meetings. Whose are they, and how did you get them ?

S. C. My son, you are determined to lead me from one to the other. Those writings have been collected from different places; some from Corinth, from Rome, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and other cities and countries, and have lately been put together into a book. Four of them give an account of Jesus, a fuller account than the one I gave you ; the first was written by Matthew; the other by Mark, a disciple of Peter: the third by Luke, a fellow-companion of Paul; the fourth was written only ten years ago by John, together with another book, replete with mysteries, which he wrote on the Isle of Patmos, whither he was banished by Domitian. And we read other writings, twenty-two in number, principally written by the apostle Paul, and sent to the several churches, which are now all carefully preserved and attentively read. You ought to read them all, for in them you will find the truth of all what I have told you concerning our religion. Now tender me your hand, that I may return home. Please to lead me through these heaps of stones.

W. S. O ! aged father, I do not wonder at you that you are stiff; but I am astonished

that you can walk at all on account of your advanced age !

S. C. Yes, my son, you may think how one should stand it as I do, who has lived to see thirteen emperors reign. For I was born in the 31st year of the reign of Augustus, and was 26 years of age when Tiberius began to reign, in whose reign Christ was crucified, and when the gospel was begun to be promulgated, beginning at Jerusalem. In the 48th year of my age, Caligula began to reign. In his reign commenced the wars in Judea, and the persecution of the apostles. Three years afterwards, Claudius succeeded, in the 50th year of my age. About that time the gospels were written, and preaching was common everywhere. In my 65th, the cruel tyrant Nero began to reign. During his reign, nearly all the apostles were martyred, and the destruction of Judea began. Galba, Otto, and Vitellius reigned in the 80th year of my age. After that, Vespasian reigned *ten* years: during his reign this city was most dreadfully destroyed, which I have circumstantially related to you, and the ruins of which you now see before you. In my 90th year, Titus reigned peaceably; but before the expiration of three years, his brother Domitian began to reign, who persecuted all the Christian churches. And in the 108th year of my age Nerva began to reign, and

reigned well for two years, under whom we had a short respite. But when I entered upon my 111th year, it was reported that a good emperor had began to reign; it was Trajan, in the beginning of whose reign the holy apostle John died happy. As I told you, this emperor has persecuted us these eight years, and how long this may continue, only He knows to whom all things are known. But I, who have nearly attained the age of Moses, expect nothing else than to die unto Christ my Lord, and through him to enter into everlasting bliss.*

W. S. Father, I wish you that with all my heart. I shall long remember your narration. When I see these old arches, these dilapidated streets, these walls in ruins, these fumigated stones, these green mountains, with here and there the remains of an edifice, and especially those high towers, whose tops reach the clouds—these *all* will bring to my mind the dreadful destruction of this city. Mount Zion will bring to my mind the kingdom of David; Mount Moriah will remind me of the temple; Mount Calvary, of the crucifixion of Christ; Mount Olivet, of his

* Simon Cleophas was crucified in the year A. D. 109, by Atticus, by order of Trajan. See *Eus. Ecc. Hist. lib. 3, cap. 11, &c. Epiph. supra in Symb. Alph. &c.* Compare the 1st Book of *A. Mellin*, printed 1617, fol. 24, col. 1, 2, with *Hist. Martyrs, John Gysii*, more recently printed by *L. Broat*, A. D. 1657, fol. 15, col. 1. &c. See also *T. J. V. Bracht's Hist. Mar. Ephrata Ed. 1748*, fol. 40, in German.—Trans.

ascension ; ruined Bethlehem, of his birth-place ; the broken walls of the fountain, of his entrance into Jerusalem ; Bethany, his place of residence ; and the whole country will strongly bring to my mind his sojournings and travels ; also the history of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the apostles, and all that you have related to me. But how should I know what all these things meant, had you not, reverend father, instructed me ? How profitable it is to converse with wise and old men. Your narration did not only satisfy my curiosity, which was at first excited when I saw those dilapidated buildings ; but I have also been informed of the whole history of the Divine procedure respecting the things which Adam, Noah, and you related to me, which have been all set before me in order. I have understood the Divine goodness in the fulfilling of his promise ; His wisdom, in their direction ; His power, in destroying the powers of this world ; His justice in punishing sin ; and finally His incomprehensible mercy towards those who love and fear him. Your historical relation shall be to me as a well-finished horologe, which tells the hour and minute plainly, so that, in conclusion, I may note the time. Your history shall be to me a comment upon the shadow of things, and lead me at once to the reality of the matter ; and divert me from earthly things, and direct my attention

to heavenly things—imperishable things, for which I shall always be under lasting obligations to you. Therefore, I wish that you may shine with Christ Jesus, in whom you trust; and although we part according to the flesh, that we may meet in eternal glory.

S. C. I thank you, my beloved son, and rejoice to think that you will profit thereby; and, I hope, that by proper meditation and reflection, you may still advance further, to which end may the blessing descend upon you from above, through Jesus Christ our Lord—AMEN.



CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE,

COMMENCING

WITH THE CREATION, AND TERMINATING A. D. 109, COMPRISING
A PERIOD OF RISING OF FOUR THOUSAND YEARS.

NOTE.—THE NAME, EVENT, &c. mentioned in *sacred history* begins with ROMAN CAPITALS; those in *profane history*, with ITALIC LETTERS. B. C. stands for Before Christ. The genealogy of our Saviour (names of the persons) is in ROMAN CAPITALS. The number of them included in brackets, (1,) &c.

The first age of the world.

B. C.

- 4004. God created heaven and earth ; and (1) ADAM.
- 3875. Cain slew Abel.
- 3874. (2) SETH is born.
- 3796. (3) ENOS born. Men call on the name of the Lord
- 3679. (4) CAINĀN born.
- 3609. (5) MAHALALEEL born.
- 3544. (6) JARED born.
- 3382. (7) ENOCH born.
- 3317. (8) MUTHUSELAH born.
- 3130. (9) LAMECH born.
- 3074. Adam dieth, aged 930 years.
- 3017. Enoch, in the 365th of his age, is taken up by God.
- 2962. Seth dieth, aged 912 years.
- 2948. (10) NOAH born.
- 2864. Enos dieth, aged 905 years.
- 2769. Cainan dieth, aged 910 years.
- 2714. Mahalaleel dieth, aged 895 years.
- 2582. Jared dieth, aged 962 years.
- 2469. God commands Noah to preach repentance and to build the ark.
- 2448. To Noah, aged 500, is born Japheth, and two years after (11) SHEM.
- 2353. Lamech dieth, aged 777 years.
- 2348. Methuselah dieth a little before the flood, aged 969.—
The flood comes upon the earth in the 600th year of
Noah's age, and in the 1656th year from the creation

The second age of the world.

B. C.

2347. The flood ceaseth ; Noah and his family come out of the ark.
 2346. (12) ARPHAXAD born.
 2311. (13) SALAH born.
 2281. (14) EBER born.
 2247. (15) PELEG born. In his days the earth was divided. The *Chinese* monarchy supposed to have commenced.
 2234. Nimrod begins to exalt himself by laying the first foundation of the Assyrian monarchy. *Celestial* observations begin at Babylon.
 2233. Tower of Babel built ; confusion of languages.
 2217. (16) REU born. *Asher* builds Nineveh.
 2185. (17) SERUG born. The kingdom of Egypt founded by Menes, Mesraim, or Metzer.
 2155. (18) NAHOR born. The reign of the first *Busiris* commenced about this time.
 2126. (19) TERAH, Abraham's father, born. *Semiramis*, queen of Ninus.
 1998. Noah dieth, aged 950 years, 350 years after the flood.
 1996. (20) ABRAHAM born ; he was 75 years of age when his father Terah died.
 1925. Chedorlaomer subdues the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela, who served him 12 years.
 1922. Terah with his family leaveth Ur of the Chaldeans, and dwells at Haran. About this time *Hermes*, an Egyptian priest and philosopher, invented hieroglyphics, surveying, geography, and astronomy.

The third age of the world.

1921. The covenant of God made with Abraham, when he leaves Haran to go into Canaan, which begins 430 years' sojourning.
 1920. Famine in Canaan ; Abraham and family go to Egypt.
 1911. Sarai, being barren, gives Hagar, her maid, to Abraham.
 1897. Sodom, Gomorrah, and cities of the vale of Siddim destroyed.
 1896. (21) ISAAC born in the hundredth year of Abraham's age.
 1856. The kingdom of *Argos*, in Greece, begins under Inachus. Isaac marrieth Rebecca.
 1836. Esau and (22) JACOB born.
 1822. *Memnon*, the Egyptian, invents the letters.

B. C.

1764. Deluge of Ogyges.
 1760. Jacob obtains the blessing.
 1755. (23) JUDAH born.
 1745. Joseph is born.
 1724. Joseph sold into Egypt.
 1715. *Prometheus* first strikes fire from flints.
 1711. Joseph's exaltation.
 1706. Jacob goes to Egypt.
 1689. Jacob blesses Ephraim and Manasseh.
 1684. (24) PHARES born.
 1668. The *Ethiopians*, from the banks of Indus, settle in the vicinity of Egypt.
 1635. Joseph dies in Egypt.
 1618. (25) ESRAM born.
 1577. Here begins the bondage of the children of Israel.
 1574. Aaron born.
 1571. Moses born.
 1560. (26) ARAM born.
 1556. *Cecrops* brings a colony of Saites into Africa, and begins Athens in Greece.
 1546. *Scamandar* begins the kingdom of Troy.
 1531. Moses slays an Egyptian; flees into Midian.
 1530. Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, born.
 1493. *Cudmus* carries the Phenician letters into Greece.
 1491. God appears to Moses in Midian. The ten plagues in Egypt.

The fourth age of the world.

1491. Israelites pass the Red Sea.
 1490. (27) AMINADAB born.
 1485. *Danaus* sails for Greece from Egypt; arrives at Rhodes.
 1453. The first *Olympic* games celebrated in Greece.
 1452. Moses writes the Pentateuch in the land of Moab.
 451. Children of Israel enter Canaan.
 1450. Joshua's victories commence.
 1445. (28) NASHON born.
 1443. Book of Joshua written.
 1410. The city of *Corinth* rebuilt.
 1406. Iron is found in Greece, from the accidental burning of wood.
 1405. Government of the Judges commenced.
 1405. (29) SALMON born.
 1366. (30) BOAZ born.

B. C.

1343. Othniel dies.
 1326. The *Isthmian* games instituted.
 1312. (31) OBED born.
 1273. *Tyre* rebuilt.
 1252. The Israelites, sinning again, are delivered into the hands of the Midianites.
 1198. The rape of *Helen* by Paris, which gave rise to the Trojan war.
 1184. (32) JESSE born.
 1155. Samson is born
 1117. Samson is betrayed by Delilah.
 1085. (33) DAVID born.
 1074. Saul anointed king.
 1069. Samuel compiles the books of Judges and Ruth.
 1063. David kills Goliath.
 1035. (34) SOLOMON born.

The fifth age of the world.

1004. The temple is solemnly dedicated by Solomon.
 979. (35) REHOBOM born.
 976. Shishak plunders the temple and palace.
 954. (36) ABIJAH born.
 925. (37) ASA born.
 896. (38) JOSAPHAT born. Elijah the prophet translated.
 894. Money first made of gold and silver at Argos.
 882. (39) JORAM born.
 869. The city of *Carthage*, in Africa, founded by queen Dido.
 844. (40) UZZIAH born.
 814. The kingdom of *Macedon* begins.
 779. (41) JOTHAM born.
 762. (42) AHAZ born.
 753. *Rome* was begun.
 742. Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, of Israel, are confederated against Judah.
 723. (43) HEZEKIAH born.
 720. Samaria taken. The first eclipse of the moon on record.
 697. (44) MANASSEH born.
 658. *Byzantium* (now Constantinople) built by Athenians.
 647. (45) AMON born.
 636. The *Tartars* are first mentioned in history.
 609. (46) JOSIAH born.
 600. *Thales* of Miletus travels into Egypt.
 597. Jehoiakim, king of Judah, is carried away captive by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon.

588. (47) JECONIAH born.
 587. The city of Jerusalem taken, after a siege of eighteen months.

The sixth age of the world.

- B. C.
559. Cyrus the first king of Persia.
 551. (48) SALATHIEL born.
 538. The kingdom of Babylon finished.
 526. *Learning* much encouraged at Athens.
 518. (49) ZOROBABEL born.
 515. The second temple is finished under Darius.
 509. *Tarquin*, the seventh and last king of the Romans.
 504. *Sardis* taken and burnt by the Athenians.
 486. *Eschylus*, the Greek poet, first gains the prize of tragedy.
 481. *Xerxes*, king of Persia, begins his expedition against Greece.
 468. (50) ABIAD born.
 458. Ezra sent from Babylon to Jerusalem with captive Jews.
 430. The history of the Old Testament finished about this time. Malachi.
 409. (51) ELIAKIM born.
 400. *Socrates* put to death by the Athenians for believing the immortality of the soul.
 387. *Xenophon* born.
 350. (52) AZOR born.
 331. *Alexander* the Great conquers Darius, king of Persia.
 300. (53) ZADOC born.
 284. *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, king of Egypt, employs seventy-two interpreters to translate the Old Testament into Greek, which is called the Septuagint.
 281. (54) ACHIM born.
 269. The first coining of silver at Rome.
 261. (55) ELIUD born.
 260. The Romans first concern themselves with naval affairs.
 237. *Hannibal*, at nine years of age, swears eternal enmity to the Romans.
 232. (56) ELEAZAR born.
 218. *Hannibal* passes the Alps.
 190. The first *Roman* army enters Asia.
 173. (57) MATTHAN born.
 168. *Perseus* defeated by the Romans, which ends the Macedonian kingdom.
 163. The government of Judea under the Maccabees begins, and continues 126 years.
 135. The history of the Apocrypha ends.

B. C.

114. (58) JACOB born.
107. Judas, called Aristobulus, succeeds his father in the government and priesthood.
63. Jerusalem taken by Pompey; makes the Jews tributary to the Romans.
55. (59) JOSEPH, the husband of Mary, born.
52. *Julius Cæsar* makes his first expedition into Britain.
49. Here begins the empire of the Roman Cæsars; Julius was declared perpetual dictator.
49. The Alexandrian library burnt, consisting of 400,000 volumes.
45. The war of Africa, in which Cato kills himself.
45. The solar year introduced by Cæsar.
40. Herod, an Idumean, declared king of Judea by the Romans.
38. Herod takes Jerusalem.
31. HILLEL born at Jerusalem.
28. Cæsar Octavianus, nephew to Julius Cæsar, with the assent of the senate and the people of Rome, assumes the title of *emperor*.
27. Obtains the title of *Augustus Cæsar*, and an absolute exemption from the laws, and is properly the first Roman emperor.
18. Herod enlarges, or rather rebuilds the temple at Jerusalem, 46 years before the first passover of the ministry of Christ.

Seventh age of the world.

A. D.

1. JESUS CHRIST, born in Bethlehem of Judea; is supposed to have been born in September, or on Monday, December 25th.
2. The infant Saviour returns from Egypt.
12. Disputes with the doctors in the temple.
28. John the Baptist commences his ministry.
31. Christ is baptized; calls the twelve.
32. John the Baptist beheaded.
33. Christ crucified on Friday, April 3d, at five o'clock P. M. His resurrection on Sunday, April 5th; his ascension, Thursday, May 14th.
36. St. Paul converted.
39. Matthew writes his gospel.
39. Pontius Pilate kills himself.
40. The name of Christians first given at Antioch to the followers of Christ.
40. Claudio Cæsar's expedition into Britain.

A. M.

44. St. Mark writes his gospel.
 49. London is founded by the Romans.
 52. The Synod of the Apostles at Jerusalem.
 55. St. Luke writes his gospel.
 59. Nero puts his mother and brothers to death.
 62. St. Paul is sent in bonds to Rome.
 63. Acts of the Apostles written.
 63. About this time Christianity is introduced into Britain by St. Paul, or his disciples.
 64. Rome set on fire and burnt for six days.
 67. St. Peter and St. Paul put to death.
 70. *Jerusalem* razed to the ground by Titus.
 83. The philosophers expelled from Rome by Domitian.
 96. St. John writes his Revelation.
 97. Writes his gospel.
 108. The third persecution against the Christians begins in the reign of Trajan.
 109. SIMON CLEOPHAS crucified.
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NOTE.—In preparing this imperfect chronological table, the compiler consulted several other tables, and has attempted to be as accurate as possible; however, a perfect accuracy in dates is not claimed, for the most laborious investigations on this subject have ever been attended with difficulties.



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THE END.



